



## Effective Mentoring in Physical Education Teacher Education

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# **Effective Mentoring within Physical Education Teacher Education**

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UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



# **Executive Summary**

## ***Introduction***

The primary aim of this one-year research project was to produce a Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring across the Island of Ireland, by interrogating current mentoring practice in three PETE programmes; University College Cork, Ireland (UCC), University of Ulster at Jordanstown, Northern Ireland (UUJ) and University of Birmingham, England (UB). This research was funded by the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS).

## ***Methods***

Research participants comprised six University tutors (UTs) and ten PE mentor teachers across three research sites (UCC, UUJ and UB). A range of data collection methods, both synchronous (open profile questionnaires and an online seminar) and asynchronous (online discussion forum), were used in this project. All data were analysed thematically using a constructivist version of grounded theory as a framework for data analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.141, Charmaz, 2000)

## ***Key Findings***

The five key findings in this study reveal a coherent Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring, delineated by mentors and UTs involved in this research:

1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.

2. The purpose of the mentor-mentee relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.
3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.
4. The Mentor should ensure a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and explore praxis in a variety of contexts.
5. Mentors need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentor pre-service teachers effectively.

## **Conclusion**

*'Mentoring programs enjoy sustainability over time when mentoring is embedded in an organisational cultural that values continuous learning'* (Zachary, 2000, p.167). Learning opportunities must exist on multiple levels with visible support for all partners in Initial Teacher Education, mentor-university tutor-pre-service teacher. This study seeks to draw on the lived experiences of research participants and to articulate a position statement which encapsulates a shared vision of mentoring in physical education teacher education (PETE). *'It is incumbent on researchers concerned with the nature of teaching to listen and respond to those who are living the experience to ensure the profession and the field of study remains robust'* (Sinner, 2010, p.23).

Stroot, Kiel, Stedman, Lohr, Faust & Schincariol-Randal (1998) argued that in their research, mentor training led to successful mentors who developed fertile and complex pedagogical content knowledge. The mentors also had strong listening and

communication skills with which to motivate and provide emotional support for the mentee. The claim made is that effective mentor training should focus on development of mentor pedagogies which align with pre-service learning needs. In addition, the findings yield rich information on the similarities and differences in mentoring practices across the three institutions that were involved in this project. The dissemination of the project findings should contribute valuable insight into best practices in mentoring pre-service teachers. The recommendations of this research project should therefore be of importance to all teacher educators on the island of Ireland and beyond.

### ***Dissemination***

On 24th June 2011, the researchers did an oral presentation entitled 'The SCoTENS Trilateral Mentoring Project' at the 2011 AIESEP Conference (Association Internationale des Ecoles Supérieures d'Education Physique - International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education) at the University of Limerick. The author is currently preparing an article for Mentoring and Tutoring and the European Physical Education Review. Articles for Teacher Professional journals in each jurisdiction will follow, including presentations at other conferences i.e. the Physical Education, Physical Activity and Youth Sport (PEPAYS) conference 2012 and the AIESEP 2012 conference. The author will distribute this report to the Teaching Council of Ireland, General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland and General Teaching Council (England).

### ***Recommendations***

In order to build upon and extend this research, the author recommends future studies which centre on the following:

1. Identification of effective mentor pedagogical strategies.
2. An evaluation of the impact of effective mentor pedagogical strategies on pre-service teacher learning across Blooms Taxonomy (1956).
3. Research on the impact of effective mentoring pedagogies on pupil learning.
4. An analysis of the how, when and why mentor teachers transition from simple to more complex mentor pedagogies.
5. Effective training for mentors which enhances mentor pedagogical strategies.

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## Definitions of Key Terms

**Mentee:** Pre-service PE teacher.

**Mentor:** School-based PE teacher who acts as a mentor. A mentor is sometimes called a cooperating teacher in Ireland.

**University Tutor:** University employee who assesses the pre-service teacher on teaching practice.

**School-university partnership:** Partnership between school personnel (mentor, school management) and university staff (university tutor and pre-service teacher)

## **List of Acronyms**

AFL	Assessment for Learning
APP	Assessing Pupil Progress
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BEd SSPE	Bachelor of Education Sports Studies and Physical Education
CASS	Curriculum Advisory and Support Service
CCMS	Council of Catholic Maintained Schools
COPET	Cooperating Physical Education Teachers
CT	Cooperating Teacher
DENI	Department of Education Northern Ireland
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ELB	Education and Library Board
EPD	Early Professional Development
GTCNI	General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
ITTE	Initial Teacher Training Education
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LSTI	Lucent Science Teacher Initiative

MEd	Masters in Education
NAED	National Academy of Education
NIPT	National Induction Programme for Teachers
NPPTI	National Pilot Project of Teacher Induction
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PE	Physical Education
PETE	Physical Education Teacher Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PGDIPED	Post Graduate Diploma in Education
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
ROSA	Reconnaissance, Open Consultation, Shared Language, Activated Negotiated Meaning
SCoTENS	Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South
SP1	School Practice 1
SP2	School Practice 2
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
TE	Teacher Education
TP	Teaching Practice
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
UL	University of Limerick

UB	University of Birmingham
UUJ	University of Ulster at Jordanstown
US	United States
UT	University Tutor

## Introduction

### ***He Wishes For The Cloths Of Heaven***

*Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,  
Enwrought with golden and silver light,  
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
Of night and light and the half-light,  
I would spread the cloths under your feet:  
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet;  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.*

(William Butler Yeats)

The poem expresses the fragility of the mentee as he/she embarks on a learning journey through teaching practice, urging the mentor '*to tread softly for you tread on my dreams*'. It is a plea to the mentor to be gentle, to nurture to guide him/her both professionally and personally at this formative time.

This SCoTENS funded study explores the work-based learning opportunities offered to pre-service teachers in the initial teacher education phase of the Continuum of Teacher Education (Teaching Council of Ireland, 2011) and the role played by assigned mentors during teaching practice (TP).

Arguably physical education as a subject which emphasizes adventure activities, athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, athletics and health related physical activity, has been less burdened by the formalities of other curriculum subjects. Therefore, it is tempting to conclude that a visitor or guest might be more included in this less formal learning environment by being offered access to the whole range of activities that contribute to the subject. However, with the onset of state examinations in physical education and statutory National Curricula in some regions embraced by the study, it is possible to speculate that this hypothesised 'open access' policy might be changing and the same reported restrictions that blight other subject pre-service teachers will soon occur or exist already.

Whether or not this speculative model of a more open and welcoming TP experience for physical education pre-service teachers is real or imagined, it is undeniable that the school-based preparation of pre-service teachers has been studied and presented in the relevant literature in many different ways. At the core of such research, is the understanding that professional development and training is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming knowledge into practice for the benefit of their professional and pedagogical growth (Darling-Hammond, 2006b, Darling-Hammond, 2006a, Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011). Within TP in Initial Teacher Education (ITE), the mentor develops a personal and professional relationship with the pre-service teacher in order to enhance pre-service teacher learning (McCullick, 2001).



Teacher professional learning is a complex process. It requires (a) cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, (b) the capacity and willingness to examine personal convictions and beliefs and (c) the perusal of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change within teacher education. These three facets have been seminal to this study. This study recognises that all of this apparent professional growth and development occurs in particular educational policy environments or school cultures, some of which are more conducive to professional learning than others. These differences and commonalities will be explored within the placement catchment areas of the respective universities involved in the study (UCC, UUU and UB). Clearly, professional development is not a generic process. It is context-bound. Therefore, there is a constant need to study, experiment, discuss and reflect on teacher professional development in relation to context i.e. how historical traditions shape groups of teachers; the educational needs of their pupil populations; the expectations of their education systems (e.g. duty of care to pupils, formal role of mentor); teachers' working conditions and opportunities for professional learning. This dynamic tapestry within which pre-service teachers are immersed as part of their professional preparation, can either be perceived by the pre-service teacher as supportive, challenging or overwhelming (Stroot et al., 1998). It is against this backdrop that this study was conceived. During this study, in the spirit of collegiality and collaboration, school-university personnel in UCC, UUU and UB in worked together through a variety of synchronous and asynchronous methodologies to understand the role of the mentor within Ireland, Northern Ireland and England and to evolve a 'Position

Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring' that might inform future practice in these three jurisdictions.

This report contains the following sections:

**Literature Review:** This section explores ITE, school university partnerships and mentoring in both a general sense and also in the context of pre-service teacher education. In addition, an overview of mentoring in Ireland, Northern Ireland and England is outlined.

**Methodology:** In this section, the qualitative data collection and analysis are explored.

**Discussion and Findings:** Here, the Position Statement on Effective Mentoring in PETE is discussed using in vivo quotes and relevant theory to support these findings.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** Finally, an overview of the entire study is outlined. The author completes this section by identifying future research with might build on the findings in this study.

## Literature Review

According to the US National Academy of Education (NAEd) Committee on Teacher Education (2006), typically, an ITE programme comprises three overlapping areas of knowledge, which are universal to many statements of standards of teaching across the globe:

- 1. Knowledge of learners and how they learn and develop within social contexts, including knowledge of language development;*
- 2. Understanding of curriculum content and goals, including the subject matter and skills to be taught in light of disciplinary demands, student needs, and the social purposes of education; and*
- 3. Understanding of and skills for teaching, including content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge for teaching diverse learners, as these are informed by an understanding of assessment and of how to construct and manage a productive classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006a, p.305).*

In addition to these three areas of knowledge, effective ITE programmes possess a range of key characteristics. A study by Darling-Hammond (2006b), examined seven exemplary ITE programmes in the United States (US) in a range of contexts: public and private settings, undergraduate and graduate qualifications, and large and small universities. This study found that these seven ITE programmes produced graduates who were extraordinarily well prepared from their first days in the classroom, and found that despite superficial differences, the programmes had common features, including:

*A common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all coursework and clinical experiences, creating a coherent set of learning experiences;*

*Well-defined standards of professional practice and performance that are used to guide and evaluate course work and clinical work;*

*A strong core curriculum taught in the context of practice and grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning, an understanding of social and cultural contexts, curriculum, assessment, and subject matter pedagogy;*

*Extended clinical experiences—at least 30 weeks of supervised practicum and student teaching opportunities in each programme—that are carefully chosen to support the ideas presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven course work;*

*Extensive use of case methods, teacher research, performance assessments, and portfolio evaluation that apply learning to real problems of practice;*

*Explicit strategies to help students to confront their own deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and to learn about the experiences of people different from themselves;*

*Strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling and teacher education*

(Darling-Hammond, 2006b, p.305).

Brouwer and Korthagen (2005) concur with Darling-Hammond on this and, of specific interest to this research, comment on the quality of clinical experiences (teaching practice) in an ITE programme. In their longitudinal study of 370 pre-service teachers in the Netherlands, they concluded that there are three features of any teaching practice model which are crucial for integrating practice and theory:

- Cyclical programming of college-based and pre-service teaching periods
- Supporting individual learning processes
- Intensive cooperation between teacher educators

Lewin (2004) adds to this, pointing out that having a “*constructive supportive and enlightening*” TP experience depends on four key factors:

- (a) *How it is organised and supported,*
- (b) *The mechanism of fusing theory with practice,*
- (c) *Visits of university tutors (in the absence of trained mentors)*
- (d) *Timing and duration of teaching practice (TP) (p.12).*

Dealing with each of Lewin's (2004) factors, it is important that the TP occurs in schools that exhibit best practice and that pre-service teachers are supported by well-trained mentors. It is also crucial that the university maintains constant contact and support with the pre-service teacher and his/her school mentor. It is equally important that TP and university-based sessions are cyclical and of reasonable length such that theory and practice may be integrated. This is in opposition to a 'technical rationality' model (Schon, 1983), where theory and practice are taught and learned largely separately.

### ***School University Partnerships***

Forging strong school-university partnerships is widely advocated in research literature as the bedrock of successful mentoring programmes. *'Internationally, the development of mentoring in schools in conjunction with university-school partnerships has become a key feature of re-designed teacher education over the last decade'* (Conway et al., 2009, p.118). Zeichner (2010) concurs advocating the creation of *'hybrid spaces to more closely connect campus courses and field experiences in university-based pre-service teacher education'* (p.89). This is a feature which is in stark contrast to the traditional school-university partnerships, based on convenience and availability rather than collaboration. In the past schools were viewed as sites for placements and the university maintained hegemony over mentoring and teaching practice programme design.

The nature of school-university partnerships varies considerably from formal partnerships to voluntary arrangements based on goodwill. Strong collaborative school-university partnerships have the potential to overcome disconnection and encourage praxis through a shared vision of ITE:

*School-university partnerships decrease the discrepancies between advocated practice and situated practice, thus increasing the congruence of messages between the school and university contexts. (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005, p.131)*

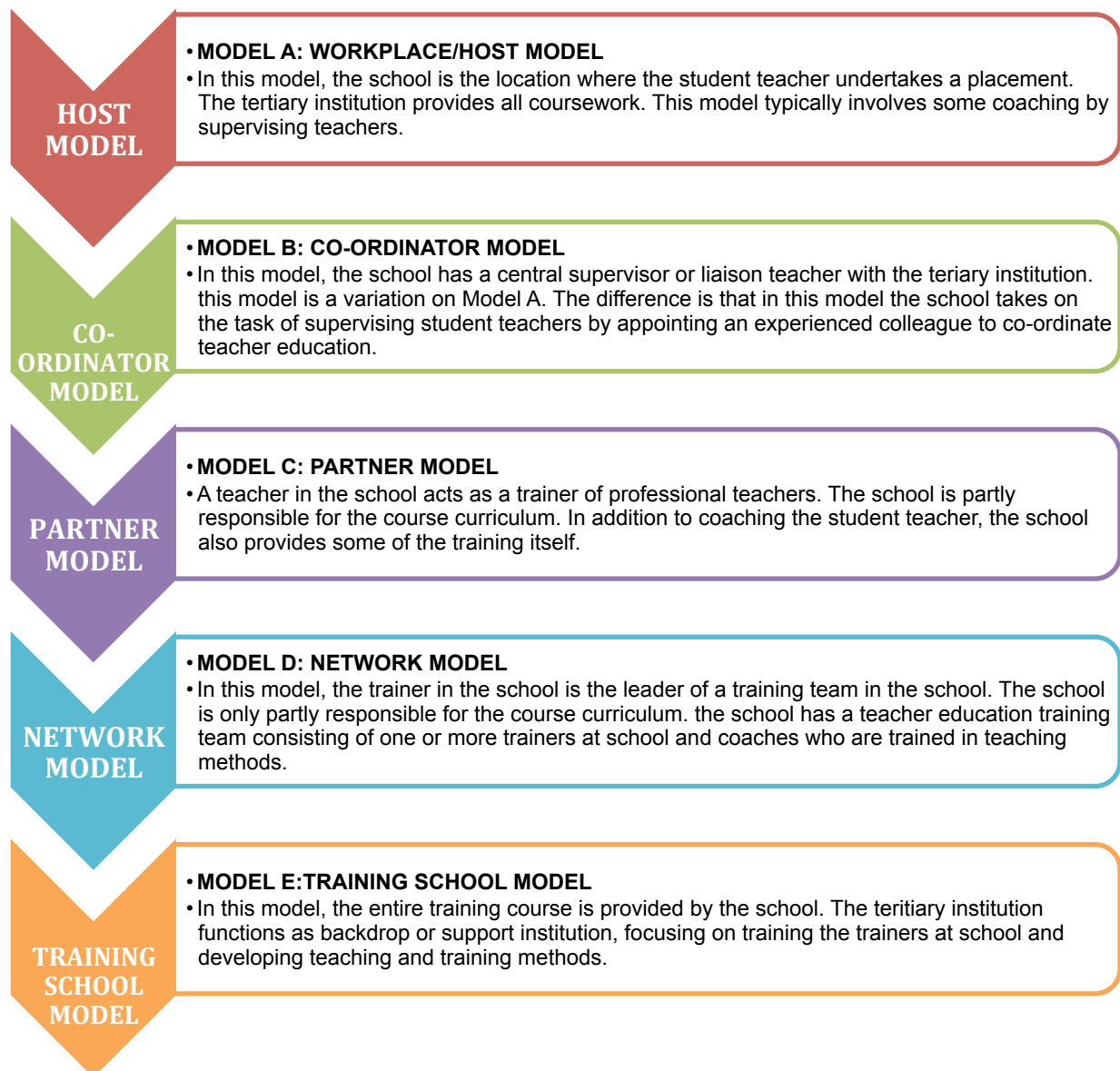
The Green Paper on Education (Government of Ireland, 1992) and the White paper on Education (Government of Ireland, 1995) all advocate the promotion of closer school-university partnerships in Ireland as an appropriate support structure in the initial stages of teachers' professional lives (Drudy, 2009, p.196). The 2007, the '*Review Paper on Thinking and Policies Relating to Teacher Education in Ireland*' echoes this view urging:

*Closer partnerships between the training institutions and the schools, and more use of teachers as mentors for students on teaching practice. It is considered that the practice of using student teachers as timetabled staff in some post-primary schools was undesirable. (Coolahan, 2007, p.11-12)*

Advocates of mentoring and closer school-university partnerships, envision their potential to address the current disparity in the teaching practice experiences of pre-service teachers through shared understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of schools and universities in ITE. Drudy (2006) develops this argument further by suggesting that the Teaching Council, established in 2006, should play a pivotal role in formulating guidelines at national level:

*There is also a need for guidelines on good practice at national level to provide norms concerning the roles, rights and responsibilities of the different partners, including the roles of the co-operating teachers and good practice in relation to timetabling and support for student teachers. These are necessary to ensure consistency of practice between different schools and universities. (Drudy, 2006. p.33-34)*

Maandag, Deinum, Hofman, & Buitink, (2007), provide a useful framework for characterising the nature of school-university collaboration. Based on a five-country cross-national study (England, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden), they describe how these partnerships vary along a continuum from the school playing a host role (work placement model) to shared responsibility between school and the higher education (partner model) to the school providing the entire training (training school model). In Ireland, school-university partnerships are typically at the work placement (Model A) end of the continuum (Conway et al., 2009, p.119).



**Figure 2.1: Five Models of University-School Partnerships**  
(Adapted from Maandag et al., 2007, p.153).

Northern Irish school-university partnerships also subscribe to model A (Workplace/host model), with voluntary host schools being reliant on the goodwill of mentor teachers. The mentor teacher does not formally assess the pre-service teacher but does give feedback. In England, the model used by school-university partnerships is B (The Co-ordinator Model) with UTs and Mentors assessing pre-service teachers formally. Mentor



teachers in England are paid to fulfill this role. The Kellaghan Report (Department of Education & Science, 2002) entitled '*Preparing Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Report of the Working Group on Primary Pre-service Teacher Education*', recommended a shift towards a more formal model '*schools and teachers should have a more formal role in teacher preparation*'. While Cannon (2004) presents a favourable review of the Irish context, he also questions the future sustainability of such informal partnerships:

*Traditionally, teachers have welcomed student teachers into their classrooms. They have been very co-operative with the colleges and supportive of students despite the absence of a structured or paid system of teacher mentoring...Colleges are acutely aware that new driving forces and increasing demands on the role of class teacher may make this high level of cooperative goodwill difficult to sustain. (ibid, p.26)*

## **Mentoring**

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor (or Mentês), an Ithacan noble and the son of Alcumus, was a wise counsellor to his friend Odysseus. When Odysseus left to fight in the Trojan War, he placed Mentor in charge of his son, Telemachus, and of his palace. Mentor was entrusted with the welfare, education and protection of Telemachus. Athena, goddess of war, handicraft and wisdom, assumed the guise of Mentor when she accompanied Telemachus in search of his father. This journey was captured in a book, published in 1699, entitled "*Les Aventures de Telemaque*", by the French Archbishop, theologian and writer François Fénelon. Fénelon created this book in order to educate the grandson of Louis XIV. This is the first recorded modern mention of mentoring (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2008). Remarkably, the definition of mentoring portrayed by Fénelon has endured.

Mentoring is a wide ranging concept as it is often defined in relation to styles and types of relationships involved in mentoring and to variations in perceived benefits of mentoring and mentorship (Patton et al., 2005). The etymology of the word mentor comes from the noun 'mentos' meaning intent, purpose, spirit or passion; wise advisor; 'man-tar' one who thinks; 'mon-i-tor' one who admonishes (Online Etymological Dictionary, 2007). The current day understanding of mentoring is rooted in its origin, and an inspection of dictionary definitions reveals it to be construed as 'a wise and trusted guide and advisor'; 'a wise and trusted counsellor or teacher'; an 'experienced advisor and supporter'; 'a guide, a wise and faithful counsellor'; a person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often also teaches them how to do their job'. For example, in the education literature mentoring has been described as:

*A powerful emotional interaction between an older and younger person, in a relationship in which the older mentor is trusted, loving, and experienced in the guidance of the younger. (Merriam, 1983, p.162)*

Detailing the context of the mentoring relationship, Kram (1985) connotes that the mentor:

*Supports, guides, and counsels a young adult as he or she accomplishes mastery of the adult world or the world of work. (p. 2)*

The adjectives wise, trusted, guiding, supportive, loving, emotional and faithful invoke the rich tapestry of the mentoring role, but also portray the mentor as all-knowing and the person being mentored, as inexperienced and, almost, passive.

Mentoring is also defined as a reciprocal relationship, mutually beneficial for both mentor and mentee *'Mentoring involves primarily listening with empathy, sharing*

*experience and learning (usually mutually), professional friendship, developing insight through reflection, being a sounding board, encouraging'* (Gardiner, 1998, p.77). The *'reciprocal dimension of mentoring relationships can help us better understand the mentoring dynamic as the co-construction of new knowledge and understanding for both mentors and protégés'* (Ayers and Griffin, 2005, p.369). The researcher would compare the needs of the mentee to a journey, requiring different types of support as he/she progresses through the teaching practice experience. Kram (1984) describes: *'the psychosocial functions of a mentor including role-modelling, counselling, friendship, acceptance and confirmation. These aspects of the relationship enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in a professional role'* (cited in Iancu-Haddad, 2009, p.47).

The mentee role evolves from passive receiver to active learner, and knowledge acquisition from the mentor is replaced by self-directed knowledge and critical reflection. The role of mentor has the potential to become mutually beneficial in terms of professional growth. McIntyre and Hagger (1994) refer to the main benefits of mentoring, including *'reduced feelings of isolation, increased confidence and self-esteem, professional growth and improved self-reflection and problem-solving capacities'* (Hobson et al., 2009, p.209). Engaging in mentoring can serve as a stimulus for reflection, a means of engaging in professional dialogue and as a validation of good practice. *'Serving as a mentor pushes one not only to model but also to be accountable for that modelling. Identifying the rationale requires reflection-on-action for validation'* (Weasmer and Woods, 2003, p.69). According to Jordan, Carlile & Stack (2008, p.202),

reflection can be on practice, in practice and for practice and is rooted in Schon's (1987) framework of reflective practice. Such reflection is prompted by the mentee-mentor relationship in two ways:

*As host teachers address their classes, aware that their student teachers are watching, their reflection-in-action presses them to strive toward good teaching decisions, as they visualise what the student teachers witness. Likewise, the student teacher's presence stimulates the host teacher toward reflection-on-action in order to later explain his or her classroom behaviours.*  
(Weasmer and Woods, 2003, p.74)

## **Mentoring and Teacher Education**

'Mentor' and 'mentoring' may well be '*transcendental semantic signifiers*' viewable from a variety of perspectives, open to various interpretations in different applications and settings (Morton-Cooper and Palmer, 1993). According to Colwell (1998) there are *two types* of mentoring: '*classical mentoring*' and '*instrumental mentoring*'. The premise underpinning '*classical mentoring*' is one of informal or spontaneous meetings with two individuals coming together voluntarily for mutual personal and professional growth (Colwell, 1998). In this instance, the mentor gives feedback and helpful advice. In contrast, '*instrumental mentoring*' is more formal or facilitated and is defined by mentee need and mentor expertise (Ragins and Cotton, 1999). In this type of mentoring, mentors require training in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of instruction. Zimpher & Rieger (1988) argue that if there is a blurring of boundaries and the type of mentoring being offered is not carefully delineated, a 'shaky' mentee-mentor relationship can result. Within the field of teacher education, it could be argued that '*instrumental mentoring*' is required. However, Newcombe (1988) cites three key differences between 'instrumental mentoring' employed in education and in other fields. Firstly, in education, the mentor is normally assigned to a pre-service teacher or

beginner teacher, instead of allowing a relationship to develop organically over time. Secondly, features of the school setting can prevent the mentor-mentee from developing a symbiotic relationship which, according to Patton et al (2005) “*dilutes the process of discovery*” (p.327). Thirdly, mentoring programmes in the educational setting are normally of short duration in contrast to longer mentor/mentee relationships established in other contexts.

### **Relationship between Mentor and Mentee**

The relationship between the mentor and mentee is a ‘*dyadic exchange process*’ that can be described as *hierarchial* or *reciprocal* (Campbell and Campbell, 2000). In the hierarchial view, mentorship is perceived as a relationship where the mentee is seen as the subordinate and the mentor viewed as the expert (Danielson, 2002) and where the mentor has greater social and intellectual status than the mentee (Reohr, 1981). Within situated learning theory, the concept of Legitimate Peripheral Participation, as defined by Lave & Wenger (1991) seems to subscribe to the view of the mentor-pre-service teacher relationship as being that of expert-subordinate. In Legitimate Peripheral Participation, the newcomer (mentee) through learning the practices of the community eventually becomes an old timer, fully participating in his/her overlapping communities of practice within, for example, a school. The movement from newcomer to oldtimer is guided formally and informally by expert ‘mentors’ (oldtimers). In contrast to a hierarchical view of mentoring, a *reciprocal* relationship encourages the development of both mentor and mentee as partners through collaboration and reflection (Campbell and Campbell, 2000). Whether the mentor-mentee relationship is hierachical or reciprocal is often defined by whether mentoring is perceived as mentor-centred or mentee-centred.

## A Mentor-Driven or Mentee-Centred Mentoring Paradigm?

Zachary (2000) proposes a mentee-centred or learner-centred mentoring paradigm in which the mentee plays a more active role in the learning compared to mentor-driven paradigms in which the mentee adopts a more subservient role. *‘There has been a shift away from the more traditional authoritarian teacher-dependent student-suppliant paradigm, where the passive mentee sits at the feet of the master and receives knowledge’* (Zachary, 2000, p.3). The mentor assumes the role of facilitator rather than expert as implied in the apprenticeship model. Both engage in a learning partnership whereby:

*The mentee shares responsibility for the learning setting, priorities, learning and resources and becomes increasingly self-directed. When the learner is not ready to assume that degree of responsibility, the mentor nurtures and develops the mentee’s capacity for self-direction from dependence to independence to interdependence over the course of the relationship.* (ibid, p.3)

This learner-centred paradigm is consistent with andragogical principles (Knowles, 1980) and congruent with best practice of adult learning theories, as depicted in the table below. There is also a marked shift from a product-oriented model, characterised by the transfer of knowledge, to a process-oriented relationship involving knowledge acquisition, application and critical reflection.

Mentoring Element	Changing Paradigm	Adult Learning Principle
Mentee Role	From: Passive Receiver To: Active Partner	Adults learn best when they are involved in diagnosing, planning, implementing and evaluating their own learning.
Mentor Role	From: Authority To: Facilitator	The role of the facilitator is to create and maintain a supportive climate that promotes the conditions necessary for learning to take place.
Learning Process	From: Mentor directed and responsible for mentee’s learning.	Adult learners have a need to be self-directing.

	To: Self-directed and mentee responsible for own learning	
Length of Relationship	From: Calendar focus To: Goal determined	Readiness for learning increases when there is a specific need to know.
Mentoring Relationship	From: 1 life= 1 mentor 1 mentor- 1 mentee  To: Multiple mentors over a lifetime and multiple models for mentoring individual, group, peer models.	Life's reservoir of experience is a primary learning resource; the life experience of others as enrichment to the learning process.
Setting	From: Face-to-Face To: Multiple and varied venues and opportunities.	Adult learners have an inherent need for immediacy of application.
Focus	From: Product oriented: knowledge	Adults respond best to learning when they are internally motivated to learn.

**Table 2.1: Elements in the Learner-Centred Mentoring Paradigm** (Zachary, 2000, p.6).

## Models and Styles of Mentoring

Within teacher education, Brooks (1996) identifies three models of mentoring used with pre-service teachers, all of which appear mentor-centred. In each model, the mentor assumes a different role. Mentors are deemed skilled craftsmen in the *apprenticeship model*, trainers in the *competence based model* and coach, and critical friend and co-enquirer in the *reflective practitioner model*. Martin (1996) described three phases within the mentor-mentee relationship. The first phase is *formal* where, for example, the pre-service teachers present themselves to the expert teacher. In the second phase, any initial barriers are broken down and the relationship eases due to increased trust, respect and confidence, resulting in the mentor-mentee becoming more *friendly*. In the final phase, the pre-service teachers, perhaps, see themselves as *prospective teachers* as confidence in their expertise grows.

An alternative view to a mentor-centred focus, is to shift the emphasis and design mentoring systems around the needs of the individual mentee or pre-service teacher. Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon (2001) assert that mentoring should be mentee-centred and therefore the style of mentoring should be aligned with mentee needs. They put forward *three styles* of mentoring, depending on the mentee-needs: directive; non-directive and collaborative (Glickman et al., 2001). However, Furlong and Maynard (1995) argue that, in reality, mentors have to move between each style in order to meet mentee needs. Such needs are defined by the mentee's levels of abstract thinking, expertise and commitment (ibid). A mentee who operates at a low conceptual level and has a low commitment to teaching may require the mentor to use a directive style in order to identify objectives and direct how and when these are achieved. On the other hand, mentees who have a reasonable level of abstract thinking and commitment to their teaching may benefit from a more synergistic, collaborative style where mentor and mentee are partners in planning the development of the mentee. At another level, a non-directive style of mentoring may be suited to those mentees who have a high level of abstract thinking and who are fully committed to teaching. Here, the mentor can take a more passive role: listening, reflecting, clarifying, encouraging, and problem solving (ibid). In deciding to adopt a particular style, the mentor must recognise that every mentee-mentor relationship is unique and, as such, "*is shaped by the individuals, their goals and the school context*" (Patton et al., 2005, p.313).

### **Mentor Support Aligned to the Mentees Stages of Teacher Development**

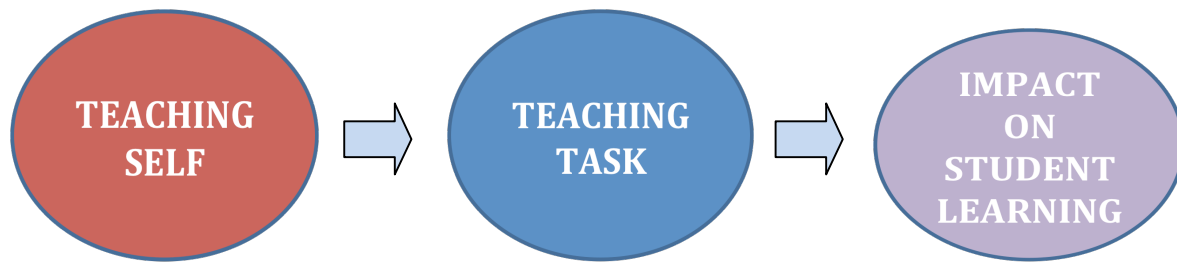
*'Mentoring support is most effective when it is adjusted to the needs of student or beginning teachers'* (Krull, 2005, p.147). The type of support pre-service teachers



require during teaching practice, is inextricably linked to developmental theories of knowledge growth and expertise (Fuller, 1969a, Fuller and Brown, 1975, Kagan, 1992, Berliner, 1986, Berliner, 1992, Furlong and Maynard, 1995, Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986).

*Theories of learning provide a starting point for principles of teaching. Any curriculum or training course has views of learning built into it and any teaching plan is based upon a view of how people learn.* (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.5)

Fuller (1969) posits a three stage '*concerns theory*', following a hierarchical pattern. Reeves & Kazelskis (1985, p.267) define concerns as '*something he or she thinks frequently about and would like to do something about personally*'. The first stage of teaching is concern for **Self**, revealed in such concerns as survival in the classroom or gym, acceptance by peers, feeling of inadequacy, lack of confidence and obtaining a good grade on teaching practice. The second stage is concern about the teaching **Task**, as evidenced by concerns about the teaching situation (e.g. duties and responsibilities, resources, number of pupils, classroom management and pedagogical content knowledge). The third stage of concern is **Impact** of teaching on pupils, indicated by concerns for meeting diverse student needs and adapting to meet these needs. Conway & Clark's (2003) extension of Fuller's (1969b) concerns-based model of teacher development, terms the shift from self to tasks to students as '*a journey outward*' and incorporates concerns about '*their personal capacity to grow as a teacher and person, as their understanding of teaching and all that it involves changed – an inward journey*' (ibid, p.465).



**Figure 2.2: Fuller & Brown (1975) Plot Sequential Stages of Teacher Concerns**

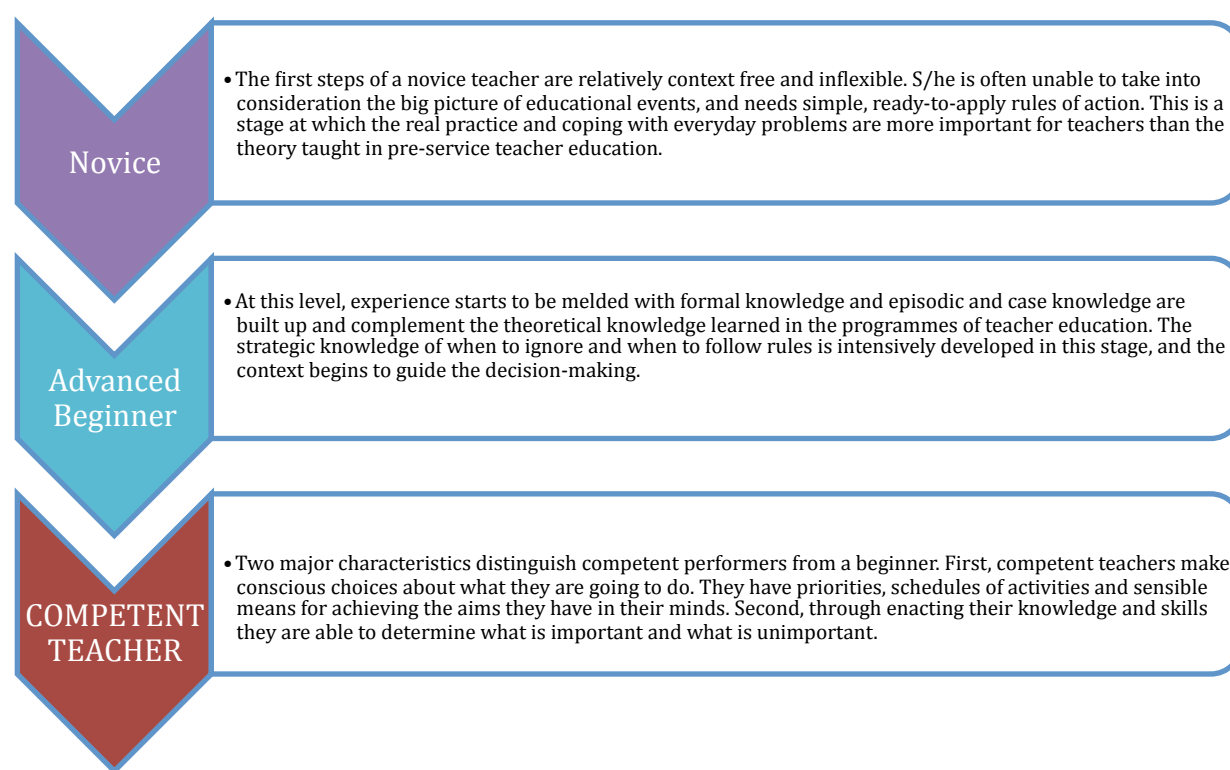
Berliner's (1992) model of teacher expertise and developmental changes in teacher professional decision-making is apt for the purposes of this study, since the first three stages, presented below describe the characteristic professional behaviour of pre-service teachers and the latter stages refer to the expertise of experienced teachers. According to this model, teachers' development of expertise spans five consecutive stages: from that of novice, beginning, competent, professional to expert teacher. The latter two stages of Berliner's (1992) model, professional to expert teacher require both time and experience, with some researchers maintaining that teachers typically take five to seven years of on-the-job experience to reach their peak. Berliner's (1992) model identifies time and experience as factors contributing to expertise, although not necessarily guaranteeing that all teachers have the potential to evolve into expert teachers:

*The expert teacher with ten years of experience has spent a minimum of ten thousand hours in classrooms as a teacher, preceded by at least fifteen thousand hours as a student. While not all such experienced teachers are experts, there are not likely to be many expert pedagogues who achieve their status without extensive classroom experience. (ibid, p.809)*

The characteristics of the first three stages of Berliner's (1992) model of developmental changes in teacher professional decision-making are presented below. The implications of this model, are to firstly assist mentors in the recognition of their mentees actual level

of professional development and secondly to facilitate progression to the next level. It is also noteworthy that pre-service teacher learning is progressive and that individual needs and rates of progress differ. Quality guidance and support can be adjusted to pre-service teachers' developmental needs. Commenting on Berliner's (1992) stages of teacher development, Odell & Huling (1990) identify:

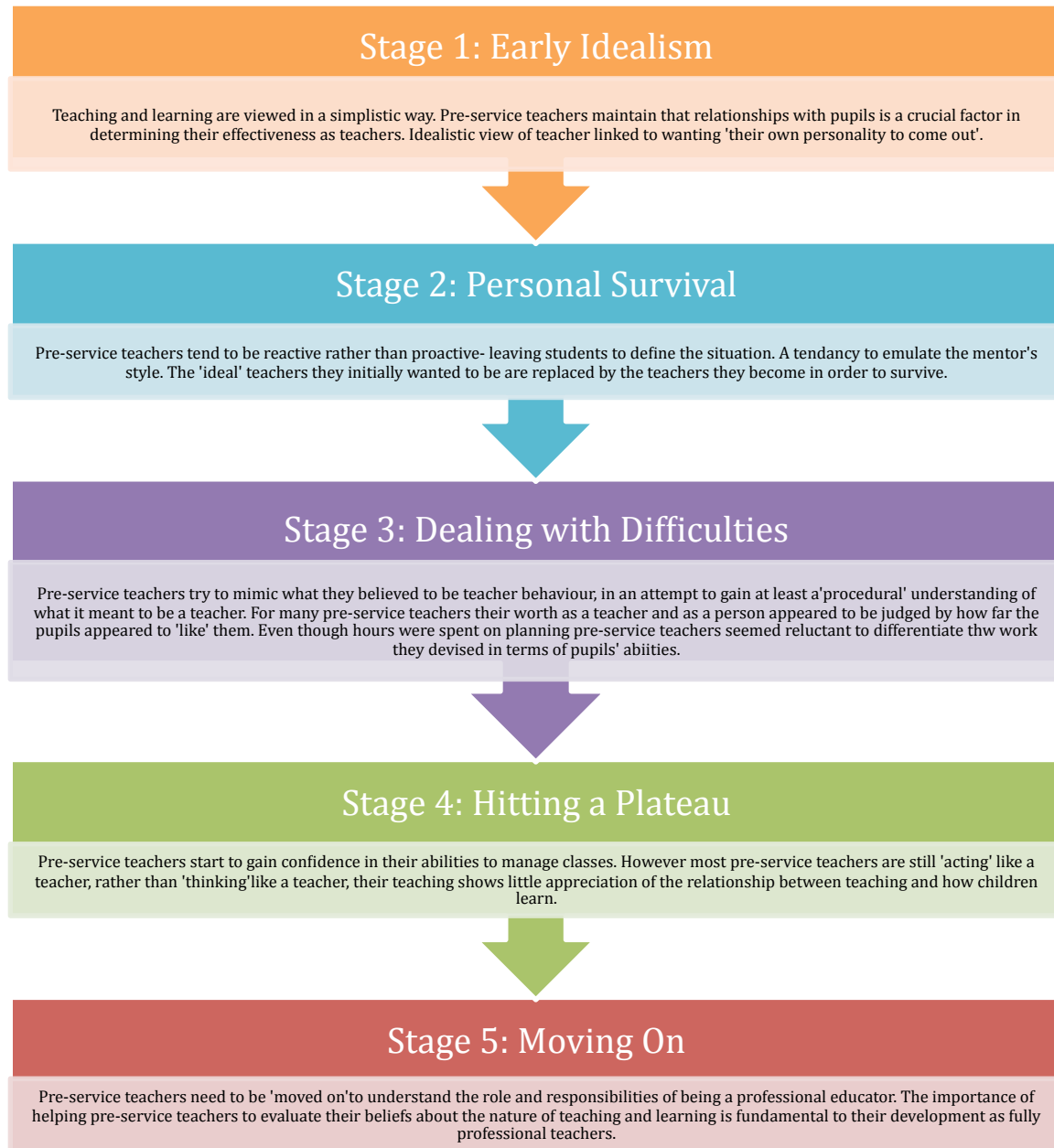
*The common underlying theme is that novice teachers will initially have lower level concerns related to self and the mechanics of classroom management that they must resolve before higher level concerns related to student well-being and achievement can emerge. With guidance, teachers generally progress through these developmental stages in a relatively predictable sequence. (p.5)*



**Figure 2.3: Berliner's (1992) Stages of Teacher Expertise.**

Aspects of Berliner's (1992) stages of teacher development and expertise are mirrored elsewhere in the research literature. Furlong & Maynard (1995) describe five phases with specific functions for mentor teachers linked to the developmental stages and

needs of the pre-service teacher with whom they are working. Initially mentor teachers' model behaviours including rules, routines and expectations. Next attention is focused on competencies, with the mentor stimulating pre-service teachers to reflect. The mentor's role evolves to that of a critical friend as pre-service teachers focus on pupil learning and possibly co-enquirers. The final stage is characterised by professionalism and the application of social and moral dimensions to teaching. Pre-service teachers expound upon their practical knowledge base. A common thread in all stage theories of developmental changes in teachers is their focus on distinctive points evident in teachers' ways of thinking, as outlined above in relation to Berliner (1992), Furlong and Maynard (1995) and Fuller (1969a). *'The research base on stages of teacher development provides relatively consistent findings'* (Watzke, 2003, p.211).



**Figure 2.4 Furlong & Maynard's (1995) Five Stages of Pre-Service Teacher Learning**  
[Adapted from: (Fletcher, 2000, p. 18-19 & Kirk, MacDonald & O'Sullivan, 2006, p.416)]

It is advocated that with guidance, teachers generally progress through these developmental stages in a relatively predictable sequence. The challenge for mentors resides firstly in the recognition of their mentees actual stage of teacher development

and secondly to facilitate progression to the next level. Conway & Clark (2003, p.472) reported an over-dominance of self-as-teacher concerns evolving during teaching practice rather than *'remaining frozen in self-survival concerns as Fuller predicted'*. There is a danger in viewing stages of teacher development as linear in nature. Pre-service teacher learning is progressive and individual needs and rates of progress differ. McIntyre & Hagger (1996, p.77) concur that teaching makes demands on the 'self' as pre-service teachers try to forge their identity; *'the trainees' sense of identity and the rift and shift between their personal and professional selves is often at the centre of their concerns'*. The merits of analysing the nature and stages of pre-service teacher learning resides in heightening an awareness of pre-service teachers' most salient concerns, aligning mentoring support to mentees stages of teacher development and accepting that lower level concerns must be resolved prior to expectations about addressing student learning and achievement. This view is also echoed by Fletcher (2000), who highlights the benefits of dynamic mentoring, aligned to the stages of teacher development;

*The flexibility of good mentoring lies in recognising where a trainee is in relation to a particular skill...we need to start our mentoring at the point where trainees are, rather than where we think they should be. (p.18)*

Fuller (1971) also recommends a greater awareness by teacher educators; *'by making the content of a teacher education program congruent with teachers' developmental needs, teachers can more readily address their most salient concerns and problems'* (p.47).

## Characteristics of Ideal Mentors

Having a mentee-centred approach to mentorship requires that the mentor possesses certain characteristics. Yamamota (1988) describes the paradox of mentorship comprising “*an experience of transcendence for the mentor and transformation for the mentee...or change in perspective* (p.187). Therefore, according to Yamamoto (1988), the principal function of the mentor is:

*Iconoclastic in nature so as to throw the [mentee] off his or her comfortable and customary perch...making the familiar unfamiliar [forcing] a reexamination of the known world.* (p.187)

To achieve this, effective mentors need particular interpersonal traits with high levels of emotional intelligence; they should be intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985) and well-known as scholars and professionals (Manathunga, 2007). It is argued by Kram (1985) that the most successful mentors are those who volunteer to mentor and who also want to enhance their own career development. In essence:

*Mentoring is seen as a reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career of both.*  
(Healy and Welchert, 1990, p. 17)

Therefore, the mentoring act can be deemed both altruistic and self-promoting as the mentor-mentee relationship is often a vehicle for achieving midlife ‘generativity’ (Erikson, 1963):

*A transcendence of stagnating self-preoccupation via exercise of an instinctual drive to create and care for new life, whether in the form...of productivity, or of creativity.* (Erikson, 1977, p.1)

In this way, being a mentor is a positive influence on experienced teachers who are in need of renewed impetus in their careers (McCaughy and Rovegno, 2003). Furthermore, Cox (2000) suggests that central to the notion of mentor self-promotion is

the idea that effective mentors have an understanding of self or an emotional competence and *“are comfortable in their own skin”* (p.2). Having such traits, the mentor functions in developing the mentee’s career and also their psychosocial skills, linking to Fromm’s (1956) view that the mentor is *“not only, or even primarily, a source of knowledge but his function is to convey certain attitudes”* (p.117). Kram (1995) outlines the palette of mentor career functions as sponsorship, exposure and visibility, providing challenges, protection and training in ethical procedures. The psychosocial function relates to fostering competence, identity and self-efficacy through role modelling, counselling and friendship. It is argued that an experienced, emotionally competent mentor, can move easily between each function using *“deep listening”* (Snowber, 2005, p.345) as a key mentoring skill:

*Listening to everything in the interaction, the mood, tone and posture of the mentee, not just what is said but on all the forms of communication. [It is the duty of the mentor to listen to the] passion and purpose, perhaps not yet revealed, in the one being mentored. (ibid, p.345)*

In so doing, the mentor’s task is *“to open up a hospitable space allowing the student to be herself, because she is received graciously”* (O’Reilly, 1998, p.8). Overall, the range of mentoring skills allows the effective mentor to fulfill a number of roles:

*Good mentors are critical friends, personal guides, counselors, engaged in a relationship that can become as fundamental to the personal development of the mentor as to the development of the mentee. (Fletcher, 1998, p.110)*

Within this ‘hospitable space’, the mentor introduces the following concepts to the mentee *“good practice of teaching, learning how and why good teaching comes about and moral support”* (ibid). This knowledge is the currency of mentoring, passed from



mentor to the mentee (pre-service teacher), which can be described as ‘Pedagogical Content Knowledge’ or PCK (Shulman, 1986) encompassing:

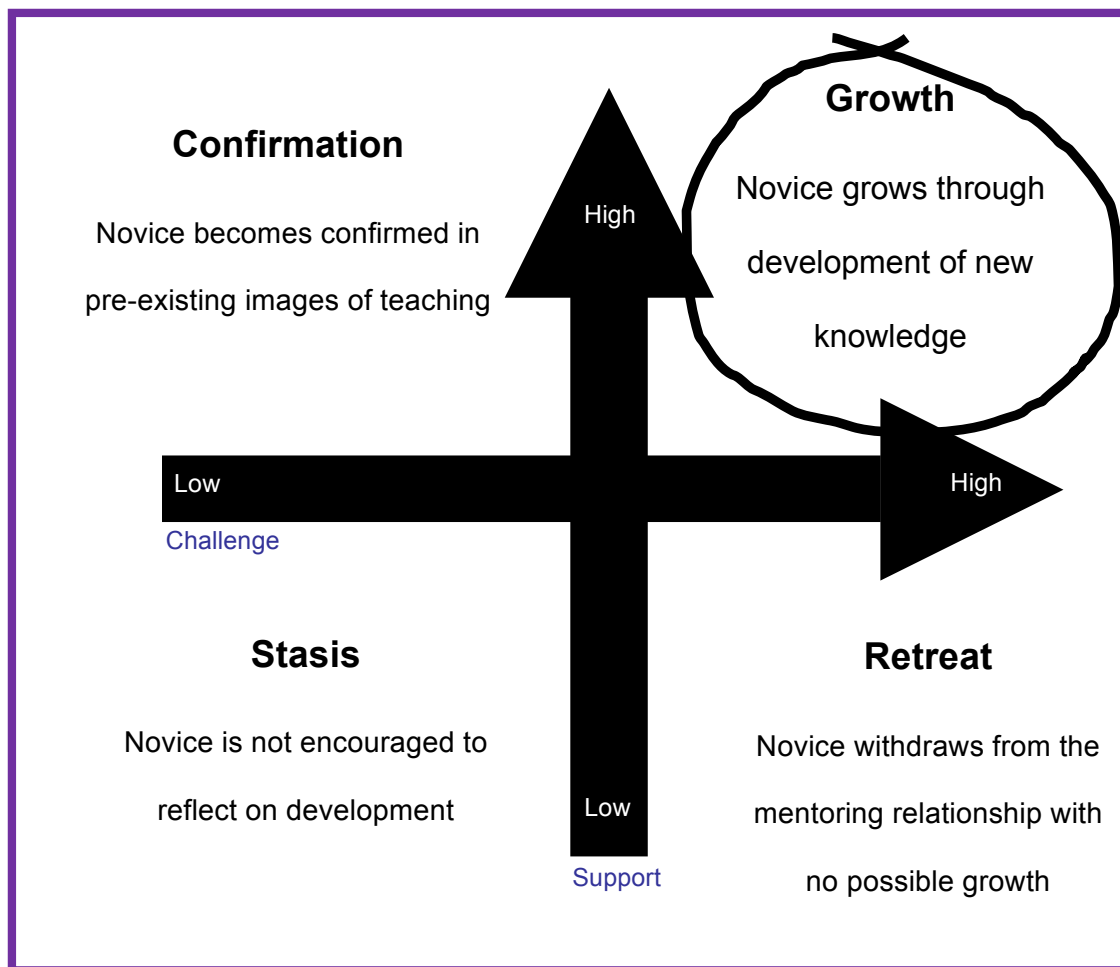
*An amalgam of all teachers’ cognitions, including declarative and procedural knowledge, beliefs and values that influence their preactive, interactive and postactive teaching activities. (Zanting et al., 2003, p.196)*

This, in itself, is not enough as it is not only important to articulate the ‘how of teaching’, but, the ‘why of teaching’ must also be shared if true “*experiential wisdom*” is to be conveyed to the pre-service teacher (ibid, p.196).

### **The nature of mentor support and the creation of a safe learning space**

Daloz’s (1986) model of mentoring, and its use of developmental theory, stems from the work of Piaget (1970) and Dewey (1938, 1910) and locates the pre-service teacher within a context of support and challenge. This model is based upon the view that where support is low there is little opportunity for any challenge to occur and the pre-service teacher may withdraw from the mentoring relationship. Conversely, if support is high new knowledge and images of teaching become possible for the pre-service teacher. Edwards & Collinson (1996) attribute a ‘*mentor’s reluctance to criticise students’ practice for fear of discouraging*’. Sensitivity and diplomacy are key attributes for effective feedback, as highlighted by a statement made by a pre-service teacher referring to feedback ‘*you want to be involved in it, not have it done to you*’ (Rippon and Martin, 2003, p.220). However, as Moran (2009, p.4) posits, the simultaneous provision of challenge and support is a difficult task for mentors. It is important, as Daloz (1986) shows, that the mentoring process is not simply a cosy process of supporting our

mentees and congratulating them on their skill, but that it also offers some degree of challenge and hence the possibility of professional growth.



**Figure 2.5: Daloz (1986) Model of Mentor Support and Challenge**

A key challenge for mentors is the simultaneous provision of both high support and high challenge as advocated by Daloz (1986):

*If mentor teachers are unwilling to criticize, perhaps out of fear of negatively affecting the relationship shared with the student teacher, progress will be slow. Unless student teachers know*

*where their areas for improvement lie, they are likely to flounder with no direction.* (Glenn, 2006, p.91)

Similarly, the purpose of a study conducted by Bertone et al., (2006) was to characterise the development of a pre-service PE teacher's professional identity, by analysing post-lesson verbal conferences between mentor and mentee.

*During these meetings, they (mentors) favour those interactions that protect the trainees, provide the opportunity for them to consider the CT (cooperating teacher) like a colleague, to the neglect of those that focus on classroom difficulties and errors.* (p. 246)

The diplomatic articulation of teaching difficulties is only the first step, the mentor is faced with two possible and concurrent actions, to try to get the mentee to engage in practical reasoning or to prescribe the solution deemed appropriate by the mentor or opt for a 'directive' or 'enquiry-oriented' approach, as labelled by Zeichner, et al. (1988, p.61). Little (1990) echoes the view that the mentor teacher should help pre-service teachers '*confront difficult problems of practice and use their teaching as a site for learning*' (p.130). Mentors in this study advocated that teaching practice was the ideal context for innovation and trying out different pedagogies and new content areas in a safe learning space, a view mirrored in the research literature:

*To reinforce the skills of building rapport and trust with their students, pre-service teachers should be assisted by experiencing slightly risky pedagogies, for example, in pursuing more self-directed learning.* (Wan et al., 2010, p.287)

## **Self-Actualisation and Mentoring**

Fletcher (1998) uses the concept of self-actualisation to explain the intrinsic benefits of mentorship to the mentor. Maslow (1971) describes self-actualising people as being devoted, working at something; something which is very precious to them akin to a religious vocation. A self-actualising teacher, therefore, is devoted to the practice of

teaching as a part of his or her own being. Armour and Fernandez-Balboa (2001) argue that teaching is more than an occupation, it is a mergence of personal biography and pedagogy; or, as Camancho and Fernandez-Balboa (2006) describe it, bio-pedagogy, reflecting the “*intimate relationship between personhood and pedagogy*” (p.1). In this view, mentoring is construed as being an inherent part of the teaching role i.e. the education of the next generation of teachers, and so it follows that the act of mentoring can serve to reinforce the self-actualisation of the mentor/teacher.

In ecological theory, human relationships are developed through person-environment exchanges where the ability of an organism to thrive in an environment is linked to the ‘goodness of fit’ between the person and the environment, the satisfaction of mutual needs, ability to cope, deal with stressors and the availability of supports (Germain and Gitterman, 1987). In order for the mentor-mentee relationship to thrive, it can be argued that there should also be a ‘goodness of fit’ (ibid). In the frenzy of the real world, obstacles may hamper mentor and mentee self-actualisation and thus prevent a ‘goodness of fit’ (ibid). These obstacles are (a) phase of mentor or mentee in personal life (Levinson, 1978) and (b) phase of mentor in professional life (Sikes, 1992).

In relation to how mentor or mentee’s *phase in personal life* (Levinson, 1978) might hamper the ‘goodness of fit’ (Germain and Gitterman, 1987), there are a number of considerations. The first is encompassed in the term person-pedagogue (Armour and Fernandez-Balboa, 2001), where teachers’ lives become an integral part of the act of teaching. Therefore, it follows that both the mentor and the mentee’s (pre-service

teacher's) lives impinge on the mentoring relationship (Levinson, 1978). Taking account of the fact that the mentoring relationship is built on trust and collegiality (Merriam, 1983), difficulties may also arise if there are differences in personality. To circumvent these issues which are unique to each mentoring relationship (Patton et al., 2005), Blackburn, Cameron & Chapman (1981) have identified cases where mentors tended to nurture those mentees who were in fact clones of themselves in terms of profile, personality and aspirations. In the interest of preserving a positive mentee-mentor relationship, some mentees may be reluctant to take risks in planning and use teaching strategies, which differ from their mentor teacher. Maynard (2000, p.27) posit that much of energy on teaching practice is afforded to:

*Keeping the relationship right' and 'Experience of school-based teacher education in England, can simply mean learning to fit in, while not disrupting the precarious equilibrium of existing classroom practices. (Ellis, 2010, p.110)*

This is condemned in the research literature; *'to use only tried and tested methods contributes at best to sclerosis in thinking; at worst, it traps students...of education in the methods – and indeed the minds – of others'* (Edwards and Blake, 2007, p.45).

A second influential factor on the quality of mentoring is the position of the mentor in their professional life or *'phase in professional life'* (Sikes, 1992), Huberman (1989), in his study of Swiss teachers charted the professional life cycle of teachers and discovered that teachers' dispositions changed as they moved through their professional lifecycles. In Table 2.2 below, these phases are described in detail:

Number of years teaching	Career lifecycle phase
1-3 years:	<b>Career entry:</b> Painful or easy beginnings; survival, discovery, reality shock.
4-6 years:	<b>Stabilisation:</b> Taking on adult responsibilities; making a commitment to a defined professional goal; giving up other options
7-18 years:	<b>Experimentation/Activism:</b> Experimenting with different materials, student groupings, sequencing; attempts to make institutional changes.
7-18 years:	<b>Reassessment/Self-doubts:</b> Growing sense of monotony; thoughts of leaving teaching; realizing that other careers will have to be ruled out if they do not move quickly.
19-30 years:	<b>Serenity/Relational Distance:</b> More mechanical, relaxed, self-accepting
19-30 years:	<b>Conservatism:</b> Resistance to innovation, nostalgia for the past; concern with holding on to what one has rather than with getting what one wants.
31-40 years:	<b>Disengagement:</b> Disengaging from investment in work; serene or bitter.

**Table 2.2: Professional Career Cycle of Teachers (Huberman, 1989)**

Huberman (1989) explained that career development was not linear but iterative and recursive with some teachers never experiencing stabilisation. Professional development is affected by social and maturational factors (Lewin, 1954) and the teacher may oscillate between phases. Clearly, it is important to select mentors at the 'experimentation/activism' phase to harness the potential energy of the teacher as mentor. It appears to be more risky to select teachers at the 'reassessment/self-doubts' phase, in the hope that they may be re-energised and move to the 'experimentation/activism' phase once more.

The consideration of both (a) the mentor and mentee phase of personal life (Levinson, 1978) and (b) the mentor's phase of professional life (Sikes, 1992) has implications for how mentor and mentees are matched. Such matches may be initiated by the mentor, the mentee or a third party. In the case of teacher education in Ireland and Northern Ireland, universities assigned the pre-service teachers to particular schools and, in many cases an untrained mentor therein. Therefore, mentors are assigned on the basis of availability rather than suitability (Fenwick, 1999) and matching mentor to mentee in relation to 'goodness of fit' (Germain and Gitterman, 1987) is not considered. In England, mentors are selected, trained and paid for their role i.e. they are suitable but are not matched with mentee. Mentor-mentee matching might enhance pre-service teacher learning (ibid).

### **Mentor Training**

Mentor training is intended to promote a shared vision of initial teacher education and facilitates the passage from teacher to mentor roles. *'Training and education are*

*strategically linked together as part of an overall plan to keep mentoring visible... and provide a common set of understandings'* (Zachary, 2000, p.178). Hynes-Dussel (1999) asserts that all teacher educators must have a shared vision of teacher education. Therefore, mentors must work in partnership with university tutors to develop and implement the teacher education programme. Currently, mentor selection can be a haphazard process as mentors are selected on the basis of (a) being excellent classroom teachers, even though some do not have the potential to be effective mentors (Fletcher, 1998, Tannehill and Goc-Carp, 1992) or (b) being available rather than suitable (Fletcher, 1998). Coupled with this, formal mentor training programmes may not exist even though studies identify a need for serious on-going mentor training (Rikard and Veale, 1996, Hardy, 1999). It is argued that such training programmes should contain the following approaches: role-modeling, observation, data collection and feedback-focused analysis (Randall, 1992, Metzler, 1990) underpinned by a strong reflective purpose (Korthagen, 2001). In this way the mentor will be equipped to address issues of power and the effect of phases of personal and professional life in the mentor-mentee relationship. In addition, Stroot *et al* (1998) espoused that, through training, successful mentors developed fertile and complex PCK and also had strong listening and communication skills with which to motivate and emotionally support the mentee. Such mentors also learn to develop abstract thinking, expertise and commitment to teaching (Glickman et al., 2001) in all mentees not just those who appear to be 'clones' (Blackburn et al., 1981).



## ***Mentoring in Teacher Education in Ireland***

### **Introduction**

Ireland has placed some emphasis on the importance of mentoring in teacher education in the past ten years. However, the current reality for most Irish mentors is to work voluntarily as informal, untrained, unpaid mentors during TP. They do not have a formal assessment role on TP. This is due to teacher trade union embargos on such work. Mentors, as a gesture of goodwill, offer learning support to pre-service teachers in the area of classroom management and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Kiely, 2005). In spite of this altruistic work, a number of difficulties have arisen in the quality of pre-service teacher support during TP. Specifically, there is inconsistency in both the quantity and quality of learning support offered to pre-service teachers by mentors (Chambers, in press-a). Mentors seem to be confused about their exact role on TP (ibid). This can lead to difficulties in delineating the exact function of school and university personnel during TP which, again, impacts on the quality of the TP as a learning experience for pre-service teachers (ibid).

### **Structural Changes and Historical Context**

The formal establishment of the Teaching Council in March 2006, in accordance with the Teaching Council Act 2001 has a statutory role with significant powers to ensure the quality of teaching in Ireland; *“to promote, support and regulate the teaching profession”* (Teaching Council of Ireland, 2009, p.4). The Teaching Council aims to serve the best interests of education by being an authoritative, respected voice for the profession and

a guardian of teaching standards, establishing best practice at all stages on the continuum of teacher education.

The publication of the '*Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers*' (2007), mandatory registration of all teachers from 2013 onwards and the requirement of all Initial teacher education (ITE) institutions to comply with conditions of accreditation from 2010/11 onwards, stipulated in the '*Teaching Council's Registration Regulations*' (November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009) and '*The Teaching Council's Draft Review and Professional Accreditation of Programmes of Initial Teacher Education on a Pilot Basis*' (May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009), all herald an era of change and challenge.

In 2007, the Teaching Council decided to undertake a review of relevant research on teacher education in Ireland and internationally, spanning the continuum of initial teacher education, induction and life-long in-career development. The review was undertaken in two parts the first of which was a background paper prepared by Coolahan (2007), entitled '*A Review Paper on Thinking and Policies Relating to Teacher Education in Ireland*'. This was followed by a detailed study undertaken on the Teaching Council's behalf by Conway, Murphy, Rath and Hall (2009) from UCC. In addition, '*The Telemachus Mentor Training Programme Report*' (Chambers, 2009), funded by the Teaching Council, represented the first qualitative study undertaken in Ireland on the development and implementation of a mentor-training model for PE mentor teachers.

The Teaching Council have advocated mentoring and observation on teaching practice, stipulating that teaching practice should constitute 200 hours, inclusive of 100 hours of direct teaching and a further 100 hours participating in school life;

*A minimum of 100 hours of personal experience of directly teaching a class, or classes, in one or more approved subjects. The practice in teaching must also have been mentored and supervised by the university or college concerned... and include systematic observation, collaborative work with school staff and structured participation in school life.* (Teaching Council of Ireland, 2009, p.23)

The Teaching Council (2009) also contends that pre-service teachers adopt “*a dual focus on preparation for life in the classroom as well as for active engagement in teaching within a professional learning community*” (p.9). It is against this backdrop that ITE institutions have initiated the aforementioned formal and informal mentoring programmes. Mentoring is but one strategy to combat the “*sink or swim*” experience of pre-service teachers. Murray (2007) equated ITE institutions as “*gatekeepers*” of the profession and maintained, “*it is our responsibility to share any feedback we gain on what characterises good mentoring*” (p.273).

## **The Here and Now**

In the past ten years, there have been some key developments:

**The Lucent Science Teachers Initiative (LSTI)**: This programme trained school-based science teachers to act as mentors during the teaching practice placements of second-level Science pre-service teachers at the University of Limerick and across twenty-five schools in Ireland. This programme ran from 2000 to 2003, and was sponsored by the Lucent Technologies K16 programme. A study on the effectiveness of this programme (Kiely and McClelland, 2005) found that when school-based mentors were trained in both cognitive and interpersonal mentoring skills, they impacted significantly on the

quality of Science pre-service teachers' teaching practice; *the presence of a Lucent mentor Teacher provides the student with an accessible source of advice and the ongoing support of a professional who has been trained by the university* (p.5).

Postgraduate Courses in Mentoring: The Masters Degree of Education in Educational Mentoring is a three-year taught masters degree programme 'exploring the policy, principles and practice of mentoring as it seeks to promote dialogue on teaching and learning within the paradigm of a caring professional in a school-university partnership'. The University of Limerick developed it in 2005 to educate second-level teachers as mentors for pre-service teachers and newly qualified teachers. Teachers apply to study on this programme and the Irish Department of Education and Skills fund the first year of study. Other postgraduate programmes have incorporated modules on mentoring such as the taught Masters in Management in Education offered by Waterford Institute of Technology.

The National Pilot Project on Teacher Induction (NPPTI): This programme was established in 2000 by the Department of Education and Science (DES) and funded through its In-career Development Unit. The central aim of the NPPTI is to train school-based mentors to induct newly qualified primary and post primary teachers in their probation year. School Principals choose whether their teachers will to become involved in this programme. The remit of the NPPTI is to provide ongoing research on the support needs of beginning teachers together with the continuing professional development requirements of mentors who support these beginning teachers in their schools. The project has two self-contained pillars; the School of Education, University

College Dublin (UCD) is responsible for the operation of and researching induction models for second-level schools in the post-primary pillar, while St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, is responsible for the primary pillar. The publication of the NPPTI report (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006) "*indicate that induction support involving mentoring and other support provision is regarded as essential by school principals and beginning teachers*" (cited in Drudy, 2009, p.198). Killeavy & Murphy (2006) asserts "*induction appears to hold promise as a possibility for encouraging learning, enhancing teaching and expanding leadership opportunities in schools*" (p.175). It has been renamed as the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT).

## **Training and Preparation of Mentors**

### **Physical Education Teacher Education Initiatives in Mentoring**

Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Ireland (representative body for PE teacher educators in Ireland) believe in (a) Teacher Education (TE) within hybrid spaces which intersect school-university and community (Zeichner, 2010) and (b) School-university partnership as central to ITE. With this in mind each University (University College Cork, Dublin City University and University of Limerick) has engaged in Mentoring Initiatives. In order to standardise mentoring at each site, PETE Ireland collated a standard statement for use in each Mentor Handbook to govern the quality of support given by mentor teachers to pre-service teachers. The following passages outline a short overview of the mentoring programmes at each university site.

## **University College Cork**

From its inception in 2006, the BEd Sports Studies and Physical Education (BEd SSPE) initiated 'The Telemachus Mentor Training Programme' (Chambers, in press-b) in order to foster a strong school-university partnership with key stakeholders [school management, PE teachers, University tutors and pre-service teachers]. The programme adopts the four-phase ROSA model [Reconnaissance, Open Consultation, Shared Language, Active Negotiated Meaning] engaging all school and university stakeholders in this organic process (ibid). Central to the programme is the belief that university tutors and trained PE mentor teachers can jointly support pre-service teacher professional learning on TP. Therefore, within the programme, PE teachers are trained off-site in school settings to (a) mentor pre-service teachers and (b) to engage in self-directed professional development. It is envisaged that the relationships forged between pre-service teachers and their PE mentor teachers during the degree programme will continue throughout their career in teaching. In 2008, The Teaching Council of Ireland funded an evidence-based research project to evaluate the impact of the Telemachus Mentor Training Programme (Chambers, 2009). Pre-service teachers are mentored during their three TP placements comprising thirty-seven weeks [2<sup>nd</sup> year – two weeks PE, 3rd year – two weeks arts subject and 4th year – thirty-three weeks]. The UT has ultimate responsibility for assessing the pre-service teacher and while the mentor does not have a formal role in assessment due to Teacher Union embargos, s/he offers feedback on pre-service teacher progress to the UT throughout placement. Assessment is based on a list of competencies which were jointly compiled by UTs and mentors during the early phase of the Telemachus Mentor Training Programme

(Chambers, in press-b). School Placement is guided by a Teaching Practice Mentor Handbook which delineates the roles and responsibilities of UT, mentor and pre-service teacher during TP.

### **Dublin City University**

The BSc in Physical Education with Biology is at early stage development, with its' first pre-service teacher cohort having graduated in September 2010. Mentoring within the BSc has primarily been embedded within the teaching practice component where a Cooperating Physical Education Teachers programme (COPET) has been developed to provide information, support and structure to cooperating physical education teachers, pre-service teachers and university tutors during TP (Belton et al., 2010). Within the Cooperating PE teachers (COPET) programme the mentoring role of the cooperating teacher is to: 1) guide the pre-service teacher throughout the teaching practice experience, 2) observe the pre-service teacher and provide feedback and ideas pertinent to their teaching and 3) encourage, support and socialise the pre-service teacher into the school environment. Future developments seek to develop a professional learning community around the triad of cooperating teachers, pre-service teachers and university tutors.

### **University of Limerick**

Faculty within the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences at the University of Limerick (UL) have, over the past couple of years, invested time in re-connecting with teachers in post-primary schools and introducing them to the potential opportunities to have a more formalized role in being an effective and pro-active cooperating teacher for pre-service teachers undertaking teaching practice placements

in their school. Faculty conducted 'road shows' where they travelled twice to each Education Centre in four regions to meet with physical education teachers who were interested in re-connecting with UL through being more formally involved in being a cooperating teacher. A shared investment in working in partnership to improve the pre-service teachers' experiences of teaching was evident through the workshops focusing on up-skilling teachers in observation skills and providing feedback to pre-service teachers. This interaction has led to the gathering of evidence-based research through two Teaching Council grants to examine the relationship between cooperating teachers and pre-service teachers, a PhD student studying the area and pre-service teachers being encouraged to examine the school-university partnership in their final year projects.

## ***Mentoring in Teacher Education in Northern Ireland***

### **Introduction**

There has been a long and positive history of work based learning support for beginning teachers in Northern Irish schools. All of the Higher Education Institutions in the province who have a remit for teacher education have traditionally valued the input from teacher practitioners hosting pre-service teachers when on school-based practice. It is important to note that the school based placement arrangements described thus were not mandatory, schools provided access to pre-service teachers on a voluntary basis and the school based support practices varied accordingly across the subject that constituted the curriculum. However, because of the practical nature of physical education and the incumbent legal requirement of the qualified teacher's duty of care,



pre-service teachers on placement were supervised directly by qualified physical educationalists all or at least most of the time.

### **Structural Changes and Historical Context:**

The main change in the teacher education programme in Northern Ireland occurred in 1996. The changes were outlined in a Department for Education paper 'Arrangements for Initial Teacher Education in Northern Ireland from 1 September 1996'. The paper set out five areas of competence which underpinned the three stages of teacher education in the Province: (Initial, Induction & Early Professional Development). The five core competency criteria were: Professional Values; Professional Development; Personal Development; Communication & Relationships and Synthesis and Application. The Induction stage was introduced at the start of the 1997/98 academic year and the arrangements for early professional development (EPD) commenced at the start of the 1998/99 academic year. The resultant paper offered direction for teachers and all professionals involved in the development of beginning teachers, the guidance offered:

*In simple terms, what experienced teachers are asked to do is to share their knowledge and skills with those starting out as teachers and to help them acquire confidence and competence in their turn. It has long been good practice for experienced teachers to give practical advice and guidance to newly qualified colleagues and beginning teachers assigned to the school. The partnership model of teacher education builds on this good practice by giving increased structure and coherence to the support that schools offer, but goes further by giving schools some responsibility for assessing students' performance and the competencies they require.*

(Department of Education Northern Ireland, 1998, p.9)

This guidance related directly to partnerships that were developing between the schools, the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) of the Education and

Library Boards (ELBs) the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and, where appropriate, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS). All partners were expected to contribute, in a flexible and collaborative way, to the provision of an integrated programme of teacher education with the aim of providing professional support to beginning teachers. The guidance from the Department for Education in Northern Ireland (DENI) further emphasised that while all partners were involved at each of the three stages, the Higher Education institutions were ‘the lead body’ at the initial stage, the Education and Library Boards via CASS were the lead body at the Induction stage and the schools were the lead body at the Early Professional Development Stage.

This partnership model of teacher education was implemented over a period of some seventeen years in schools throughout the Province with limited success largely due to the burdensome list of ninety-two individual statements of Competency that underpinned the model.

This situation prevailed until the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) revised the competences and published them in ‘Teaching: the Reflective Profession’ (General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI), 2007). They revised the ninety-two Competency Model to a more manageable twenty-seven competencies. These now underpin the teacher education programme in Northern Ireland (Department of Education for Northern Ireland, 2009). The GTCNI in this guidance document were strong advocates for the development and testing of mentoring practices in support of beginning teachers, they state:

*In providing a common framework and language it will facilitate discussion and allow for teachers, acting in communities of practice, to more readily share experiences and understandings about*

*the complex and value-laden process of education. In making explicit the knowledge, skills and values that teachers should exemplify, this publication will: offer a foundation for those working as mentors or as school-based learning and development coordinators to support beginning teachers.* (Department of Education for Northern Ireland, 2007, p.6)

Emerging from this guidance paper the GTCNI commissioned another report into School Based Professional Development that would prove seminal in influencing current guidance and future practice in supporting beginning teachers in the context of the classroom. The paper introduced and qualified the terms 'mentoring' and 'coaching' and how they respectively related to the professional development of teachers at all levels of their professional induction and development. In many ways, the GTCNI paper supported the stance of Simkins et al (2006) who argued that coaching was a more recent phenomenon and had a narrower focus than mentoring tending to apply to more skills based, job specific tasks rather than broader career development factors. Indeed, mentoring is portrayed in the literature as a longer term relationship according to (Rhodes et al., 2004) following teachers throughout their professional journey via ITE, Induction and Continuing Professional Development phases. It is this more longitudinal perspective that is advocated in all or most of the guidance documents that prevail in Northern Ireland.

### **The Here and Now**

From the perspective of what is currently happening in Northern Irish Schools, mentoring in PE at the University of Ulster Teacher Education programme follows the work-based model of practice outlined by Anderson & Shannon (1995). The activity of mentoring is encapsulated by:

- An intentional process
- A nurturing process
- An insightful process
- A supportive process and
- A role modeling process

Anderson et al (1987) define mentoring as;

*A nurturing process in which a more skilled or experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé. (ibid, p.29)*

UUJ postgraduate physical education pre-service teachers in two school based placements (each of twelve weeks duration) have the opportunity to build and foster such relationships with senior department colleagues as described by Anderson & Lucasse Shannon (1995). The actual mechanism of this relationship is as follows. Pre-service teachers negotiate a fifty percent timetable so that they have time to prepare for each of their observed teaches and they also have time to meet with their department colleague before the assigned lesson. In this 'Pre-Impact' meeting the focus of the discussion is the pre-service teacher's lesson plan and lesson pedagogy. There is opportunity for the experienced teacher to reinforce the content and/or pedagogy as planned or to suggest amendments at this stage. The pre-service teacher's taught lesson is then overseen by the class teacher, traditionally called the 'Impact' stage of the teaching. There then follows a 'Post-Impact' review of the taught lesson, the focus of which is the twenty-seven Teaching Competencies required by the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. This process is guided by

documentation that the school receives from the University when they agree to host a postgraduate pre-service teacher. This is a detailed guidance document entitled 'The School Based Placement Handbook'. In addition, the University assigns members of staff who have the responsibility to liaise with groups of schools hosting students on placement. The first contact here is with the senior member of staff responsible for all pre-service teachers on placements in their school. This mechanism facilitates quality assurance and early interception of any emerging issues.

At the subject level, the university assigns a specialist supervisor for physical education who is responsible for liaising with the host department specifically in relation to the placement pre-service teacher. This UT works directly with the host department staff and arranges such things as joint observations and assessments of the pre-service teacher performance. It is important to note here that it is the UT who assesses the placement pre-service teacher's competency and not the mentor. This is vital insofar as the relationship between the subject mentor and pre-service teacher at no time becomes sullied by subjective assessment. This remains the bailiwick of the UT.

### **Training and Preparation of Mentors**

It is important to note that at present in Northern Ireland there is no opportunity for the training and development of teachers to become mentors. UUJ has recently expanded their suite of Level 7 Master's modules to include a 'Mentoring for Professional Development in Educational Contexts' Module. This became available for serving teachers in Northern Ireland in February 2011. Moreover, the Educational Training Inspectorate for Northern Ireland have endowed the University to pay up to two thirds of

the course fee for serving teachers to undertake the course such is the importance they attach to this professional role.

DENI is now recognising the central role that personal and interpersonal critical reflective practice will play in validating the challenge laid down in another DENI guidance document: 'Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement' (Department of Education for Northern Ireland, 2009). This document requires schools to devise development plans based on effective teaching and learning methods and in so doing acknowledges the sentiment that is offered by Stigler & Hiebert (1999) that the most effective way of improving schools and teaching is in the context of the classroom. If the 'Every School a Good School' document is to be more than a slogan in Northern Ireland must see schools operationalising Seigler & Hiebert's sentiments by facilitating a professional collegial environment in which critical reflective practice is nurtured and facilitated at all levels of teacher professional development and not just at the level of the beginning novice teacher.

## ***Mentoring in Teacher Education in England***

### **Introduction**

*Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom.*

This statement was made by the Michael Gove MP, current Secretary of State for Education in England, during the National College Annual Conference in June 2010. Gove's comments signaled the policy intentions of the new Coalition Government in the

England. The intentions have since been formalised in a White Paper for Education (Department for Education, 2010) entitled 'The Importance of Teaching'. Strategies in the White Paper designed to improve the quality of Initial ITE in England include:

- Raising the quality of entrants into the profession by withdrawing funding for applicants with less than a 2.2 degree classification; recruiting 'high fliers' into the profession by increasing the number of trainees in 'Teach First' programmes. Teach First is a new initiative which seeks to recruit 'high achieving' young graduates to teach in challenging schools. These graduates generally have a First class honours degree in a subject, related to the area they will teach. They commit themselves to teaching a minimum of two years in these schools. Recruitment of the candidates is conducted by private sector companies and candidates receive some subject specific training and some leadership training, before embarking on the school-based element of their training.
- Following a similar programme in the US, encouraging applicants from the Armed Forces to become teachers in an attempt to improve pupils' discipline and motivation.
- Creating a network of flagship 'training schools' (linked to universities).

The policies are underpinned by a desire to stimulate a further increase in the number of teachers to be trained through school-based routes into teaching:

*We will provide more opportunities for a larger proportion of trainees to learn on the job by improving and expanding the best of the current school-based routes into teaching – school-centred initial teaching training and the graduate teacher programme.* (Department for Education, 2010, p.23)

Whilst the detail of how these proposals are to be implemented is yet to emerge, they represent clear policy intentions to further shift the balance of teacher training from Higher Education Institution (HEI) to schools. Ironically, the publication of the White Paper announcing these shifts also coincided with the Annual Inspection Report into the Quality of Initial Teacher Education in England (Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), 2010), which indicated that the quality of teacher training was best in university-led routes into teaching. In the current climate of rapid political change, it is too early to predict the exact outcomes of these policies or their effects on teacher training in England. At the very least it would appear that the 'turbulent recent history of initial teacher training in England' as Mentor et al. (2006, p.271) describe it, is set to continue in the near future. The following section provides a brief historical overview of recent key education initiatives and policies that have shaped the diverse landscape of ITE in England.

### **Structural Changes and Historical Context:**

Since the Education Reform Act of 1988 there have been many structural and statutory changes that have affected those involved in Initial Teacher Training and Education (ITTE) in England. Whilst all aspiring teachers in England are subject to the same competency-based assessment framework in order to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), there are now multiple pathways to achieving this goal (Menter et al., 2006, Gower and Capel, 2004). Menter et al. (2006) describe these developments as follows:

*There has also been increasing diversification in the nature of pre-service provision, with school-centred and employment-based routes being added to the more traditional Higher Education (HE) led programmes such as Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Post Graduate Certificate in Education*



*(PGCE) courses. But even these more traditional routes are varied now, with BEds of from two to four years in duration, PGCE courses which may be 'flexible' and/or part-time and may be one or two years long. In summary, although the traditional routes still provide the majority of new teachers in England, there is now a host of routes of entry to the teaching profession, which have various levels of participation and involvement from different stakeholders, including some which have no HE involvement at all. (pp. 271-272)*

The trend towards an increase in predominantly school-based routes into ITE applies equally to teacher training in Physical Education (PE). Historically, pre-service teachers in England followed longer and specifically dedicated routes into teaching PE; for example three or four year Bachelor of Education (BEd) programmes. However, post-graduate pathways into teaching have become increasingly popular with governments (Herold and Waring, 2009). Currently, most routes into teaching secondary school physical education consist of two distinct post-graduate pathways: (i) Post-Graduate Certificate course in Education (PGCE) which is usually a one year course, delivered in partnership between a Higher Education Institution and Schools; and (ii) Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) which is predominantly school-based also, in most instances, lasting one year.

Most pre-service teachers who access post-graduate routes into teaching PE will have completed a sports-related undergraduate degree such as sport science, sports studies, sports development or sport and physical education. The structure and pedagogical content of such courses can vary significantly, which has a dramatic effect on the subject knowledge profiles of pre-service teachers (Griggs and Wheeler, 2005). The increase in flexible post-graduate routes into teaching have, therefore, resulted in an absence of the standardised prior practical and pedagogical experiences through undergraduate degree courses that might be desirable. This means that individual

trainees' pre-training profiles have to be taken into account when designing effective teacher training strategies in PE (Herold and Waring, 2009). In this context, effective mentoring and high-quality school-based learning experiences are pivotal if aspiring entrants to the professions are to make a good start on their life-long journey to becoming effective teachers of PE (Herold and Waring, 2010).

Whilst pathways into teaching have seen a significant diversification, statutory arrangements for the assessment of teachers have been increasingly formalised and standardised. The Department for Education Circular (4/98) 'Teaching: High Status, High Standards' (Department for Education and Employment, 1998) represented a key policy shift in the process of accrediting QTS to teachers in England. For the first time in the long history of ITE in England, a standardised, competency-based framework was applied to all aspiring entrants into the profession. Compliance with this framework was enforced through a system of high-stakes inspections of ITE courses and institutions. These inspections are carried out by OfSTED, with the express intention of raising the quality of teacher education through increased accountability of ITE providers (Burton and Machin, 1999).

The requirements as set out in the DfEE Circular 4/98 were developed further by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), and adopted by Department for Education and Skills (DfES), resulting in the influential document 'Qualifying to Teach' (Department for Education and Skills, 2002). This document was organised into two sections. The first section addressed the standards which candidates would need to meet, if they wanted

to achieve QTS. The second section specified the requirements ITE providers would have to meet in order to assure the quality of the processes involved. In its introduction, the document made clear its status for all those involved in ITE:

*The document is relevant to anyone involved in initial teacher training, including trainee teachers, qualified teachers and those who employ and support newly qualified teachers. All those directly involved in initial training should have access to it. The document should be used to establish a common framework of expectations and will help to promote the highest professional standards for everyone coming into the teaching profession. (Department for Education and Skills, 2002)*

This structure of this document, and much of its content served as a model for the current, latest revision of 'Qualifying to Teach', now published by the renamed Teaching and Development Agency for Schools (TDA, 2008). This document is structured under the following headings:

### **Qualified Teacher Status**

Q1 - Q9 Professional Attributes

Q10 - Q21 Professional Knowledge and understanding

Q22 - Q33 Professional Skills

### **Initial Teacher Training Requirements**

R1.1 - R1.6 Entry requirements

R2.1 - R2.9 Training Requirements

R3.1 - R3.9 Management and Quality assurance

In its ITT Requirement section, this document outlines a range of structural requirements. For example, the minimum number of days spent in school for Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and General Teaching Practice (GTP) programmes has been set at 120 days or 24 weeks of school-based practice (R2.8). Another key requirement (R2.4), stipulates the need to take account of individuals'

specific training requirements. R2.2 emphasises the need for the ‘provision to be at least satisfactory’ as defined by the system of high stakes inspections. Unsatisfactory inspection outcomes or non-compliance with the framework in any aspect result in the ITE providers being at risk of losing their licence to provide training. OfSTED requirements therefore provide an important reference point for all ITT providers in England.

From a mentoring point of view, the requirements outlined in Q7 - Q9 are of particular interest, stating that pre-service teachers must:

Q7	Reflect on and improve their practice, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their developing professional needs.  Identify priorities for their early professional development in the context of induction.
Q8	Have a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation, being prepared to adapt their practice where benefits and improvements are identified
Q9	Act upon advice and feedback and be open to coaching and mentoring.

**Table 2.3: OfSTED requirements for ITT Questions 7-9**

In its requirements, this section emphasises the importance of coaching and mentoring, providing clear guidance about ways in which trainee teachers should tackle their professional development needs. Firstly, it places the responsibility for early

professional development on the trainees themselves; in other words, it discourages mentoring arrangements where the mentor takes too much responsibility. Secondly, it challenges trainee teachers to step outside their own experiences and customary practices. Here, both mentors and trainees are encouraged to engage in a continuous cycle of critical appraisal. They are challenged to reflect on 'that what is' with a view to 'that what could be'. Finally, it is made clear that it is the trainee teachers' responsibility to act upon the advice and feedback that they receive. Clearly, even though there is a common framework, it is open to interpretation both by ITE providers and their partnerships, as well as individuals who are involved in the mentoring process.

The next section provides an overview of the ways in which the University of Birmingham has interpreted these statutory requirements and shaped an approach to ITE and mentor training in PE.

### **The Here and Now**

Teacher Training in PE has a long tradition at the University of Birmingham. Indeed the University was the first Institution in the England to offer dedicated teacher training courses in PE. Post-graduate teacher education is now situated within the School of Education and secondary school ITE provision covers a wide range of subjects including Maths, Sciences, Modern Languages, English, History, Geography, Religious Education and PE. PE is an integral part of the Secondary ITE provision and the course structure, quality assurance and mentoring arrangements for PE must be understood within the overall context of Secondary ITE at the University of Birmingham.

For more than a decade, post-graduate teacher training was undertaken through (PGCE) courses. From the beginning of the academic year (2010/11) however, the ITE courses have been renamed as Post-Graduate Diploma Courses in Education (PGDipEd) in order to reflect the increased academic value of the programme that now constitute modules at Masters Level (120 credits in total). The development of credits at Masters Level during the ITE year has resulted in a thriving cohort of Masters in Education (MEd) students in PE who return to the university, part-time, to study for the remaining 60 credits that enables them to make up the 180 credits required for a Master's Degree.

The PGDipEd course is thirty-six weeks in duration. Twenty-four weeks of this course take place in partnership schools that have been selected by subject leaders for their ability to provide high quality, school-based learning experiences. Of these twenty-four weeks, one week is allocated to a primary school placement at the beginning of the year. The remaining twenty-three weeks are divided into a shorter School Placement 1 (SP1) which takes place during the seven weeks before the Christmas break. The remaining fifteen weeks are allocated to a long School Placement 2 (SP2), which is located at the end of the course. This placement also contains the final assessment arrangements for QTS. A normal teaching week for trainees will consist of a fifty percent timetable with the remainder of the week allocated to development activities such as lesson planning and evaluation, teaching observations, whole school issues workshops and any other development activities that have been identified during the weekly mentor meetings (see next section).

The stated aim of the PGDipEd course is to develop reflective, critical and professional teachers of PE, who have high expectations of their pupils and of themselves. To support the development of critical thinking, university-based learning on the PGDipEd course also includes a series of academic assignments. In the main, these cover core topics of general and subject-specific pedagogy. One assignment takes the form of an action research project which requires trainees to synthesize academic research and school-based experience. University-based lectures, workshops and residential experiences are designed to prepare for and complement school-based experiences and to develop a wide range of theoretical and practical aspects of teaching PE.

### **Training and Preparation of Mentors**

School-based partnership arrangements at the University of Birmingham are very stable, with most partnership schools in PE having several years of experience in mentoring trainee teachers from the University. It is a requirement of all HE providers of the PGDipEd that one teacher in each partnership school is selected as a 'mentor' and trained by the university. In line with Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertion that effective learning happens in effective 'Communities of Practice', partnership schools are selected not only with a view to providing effective mentors, but also with view to the holistic experience that can be provided by the school and the PE department.

All mentors who are part of the university partnership receive formal mentor training before they are charged with supporting trainee teachers. This training is delivered in two parts. A general pedagogical element, which is the same for mentors across all curriculum subjects, introduces the University of Birmingham philosophy of mentoring

and provides general guidance on partnership mentoring arrangements. This is followed by subject-specific mentor training, outlining subject-specific approaches to mentoring in PE. Partnership mentors in PE meet on a regular basis (three times a year) to discuss relevant issues and share good mentoring practice. As part of a coherent mentoring strategy, all mentors also meet with trainee teachers in a 'transition meeting', during which trainee teachers and mentors from SP1 meet with mentors from SP2 to discuss relevant development needs for SP2.

The majority of mentors in the partnership are very experienced practitioners with several years of experience in teaching PE. There are also a small number of new mentors who are in the earlier stages of their career and have now started out to take on their first mentoring roles. Normally, these mentors are from schools in existing partnerships and have access to advice and support from experienced mentors in their schools. Some, but not all mentors are Heads of Departments in their schools. Those who are not frequently have other responsibilities such as for instance pastoral roles, in their schools. To support mentors in their work, schools receive part of the funding that is associated with PGDipEd courses. Usually, they use some of this to provide time for mentors to support trainee teachers, although specific practice in how these funds are used varies from school to school.

Mentors who have a unique specialism also sometimes get involved in providing aspects of training to the whole cohort of PGDipEd pre-service teachers. Ad hoc working parties, including both mentors and university tutors, are formed to tackle



important challenges and to develop practice. For instance, a recent working party had explored the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) by trainee teachers. They also looked at departmental assessment practices and how these impact on trainee teachers. To support development in this area, additional funding through the University was used to attract an outside speaker of national standing to provide insight into the latest developments AfL. A series of workshops then helped to update the partnership mentors and university tutors on new assessment guidance from government on Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) in PE.

Given the tight prescription in ITE, the training arrangements in place at the University of Birmingham are similar to those in other universities in England. Mentoring is at the heart of the process. In all cases, however, the current situation is one of uncertainty as the new Coalition Government seeks to reform teacher training for a mix of political, economic and ideological reasons.

## ***Conclusion***

This section of the report has outlined the theoretical basis of mentoring and also shown how mentoring manifests itself within teacher education in the three jurisdictions. As can be seen, the pre-service teacher has a very different experience in each case which is dependent on context and in particular how national policy manifests itself in each jurisdiction. The next section of the report delineates the data collection and analysis methodologies employed in this yearlong study.

## Methodology

Before embarking on data collection, ethical approval was sought and granted from UCC Social Research Ethics Committee on 28th July 2010 (see Appendix A). In this research, the study analysed three cases each located at PE teacher education sites at UCC (Ireland), UUU (Northern Ireland) and UB (England) respectively. Stake (2005) contends that case study research is not defined by a specific methodology but rather by the object of study; *'the more the object of study is specific, unique, bounded system'* (p.436), as the rationale for calling it a case study. The cases comprised UTs and mentors as outlined in Table 3.1. Therefore, this research can be classified as a multiple case study containing intrinsic, instrumental and collective cases. Stake (2005, p.437) distinguishes between these three types of case study in terms of the intent of the case analysis; intrinsic, instrumental and collective.

- **Intrinsic case studies** are undertaken because the researcher wants a better understanding of the case itself, because the case presents an unusual or unique situation.
- **Instrumental case studies** are chosen where the case provides the researcher with an insight into a specific issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate the issue. It is the issue, in this study the issue of mentoring takes precedence over the case. *'It is examined in-depth, its context is scrutinised and its ordinary activities are detailed to help the researcher to pursue an external interest'*. (Stake, 2005, p.437)

Collective case studies involve the selection of one issue or concern, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue. *'With even less intrinsic interest in one particular case, a researcher may jointly study a number of cases in order to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition'* (Stake, 2005, p.437).

While this study entails the subtle blending of all three types of case study, Creswell (2007) contends that it is the interpretive phase when the researcher reports the meaning of the case which is critical:

*Whether that meaning comes from learning about the issue of the case (an instrumental case) or learning about an unusual situation (an intrinsic case). As Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention, this phase constitutes the "lessons learned" from the case. (Creswell, 2007, p.75)*

Through this vehicle, a cogent Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring has been developed. The study utilised a range of qualitative research methods, synchronous (open profile questionnaires, focus groups, collection, online Seminar) and asynchronous (online Discussion Forum). Clearly, case studies can include *any* methodology, thus affording authors the latitude to use a wide variety of evidence – documents, artefacts, interviews, and observations (Yin, 1994). In addition, a case study may focus on an individual, a group of individuals, a school, a programme or an innovation. Here, the study centred on PE teacher education sites in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the England.

## ***The Cases***

Pseudonyms have been used throughout to protect the identity of the participants who were self-selected research participants. All participants signed the consent letters, the content of which was approved by the UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix B).

Case 1: UCC Ireland	Mentor	Mentoring Experience	UT
	Conor	1 year	Abigail
	Nora	6 years	Lucy
	Tracy	10 years	
	Aoife	20 years	
	Laoise	32 years	

Case 1: UUJ <i>Northern Ireland</i>	Mentor	Mentoring Experience	UT
	Matthew	10 years	Edward
	Georgie	20 years	Caroline

Case 1: UB England	Mentor	Mentoring Experience	UT
	William	10 years	Simon
	Sarah	20 years	Evelyn
	Andrew	30 years	

**Table 3.1: Case Study Details**

The over-riding thrust of case study research is the study of a small number of cases in considerable *depth* (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000) in contrast to, for example, social surveys which investigate many cases (individuals) and gather a comparatively small amount of data on each. In this study, an in-depth, detailed analysis of the case was conducted. In so doing, the authors built an insightful picture of each case to develop a shared 'Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring'.

### ***Qualitative Data Collection Methods***

'Qualitative data collection methods' is an overarching term for research methods that describe people's experiences, behaviours, interactions and social contexts without the use of quantification (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In order to elicit the meaning of the participants' experiences of the educational setting, an interpretive methodology was employed to gain a rich understanding of the subject matter (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.4). The authors tried to stay close to the practical experience of the study in order to ensure a close fit between the data and informants' perceptions, views, attitudes and behaviours (Minichiello et al., 1995). In addition, through a variety of data collection methods and approaches, the process of triangulation (Begley, 1996) allowed the author *"to determine how various actors in the situation view it"* (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.44). More recently, as was noted earlier, the image of crystallization (Richardson, 2000) has been used to capture this notion.

The specific approaches used in this study, to allow such crystallisation (Richardson, 2000) within the case study framework, included:

**(A) Open Profile Questionnaires** to elicit life events from participants within each case study. This is a very personal research instrument (Armour and Yelling, 2004). One open profile questionnaire was used in this study (see Appendix C). They were distributed to the PE mentor teachers in each jurisdiction. It was felt that open profile questionnaires would give the mentors the opportunity to reflect on their careers to date and thus provide the author with a very detailed, potentially rich, individual profile of these participants (ibid).

### **(B) Online Discussion Forum**

This asynchronous method of data collection afforded participants the opportunity to respond to key questions and statements posted online by UTs, at a time and location suitable to them. The record of typed responses revealed the extent to which there was a consensus or diversity of viewpoints. *“By posting to an online discussion board enabled the task design to acknowledge that today’s learners want to engage creatively, work collaboratively, share information”* (Rocco, 2010, p.308). A key benefit of the online discussion forum resides in convenience and the provision of time and space to respond to statements and other postings. It provided a platform for professional dialogue between UTs and mentors.

### **(C) Online Seminar**

A virtual seminar was conducted via conference call on the 9th March 2011 linking researchers and mentors at all three research sites, comprising of six UTs and ten mentors respectively. The merits of utilising this synchronous method of data collection reside in the fact that it facilitated visual, verbal and virtual communication in three different locations. *“The mechanical operation of the camera will document all that is*

*before it in that moment...it is not selective once the shutter is opened” (Stanczak, 2007, p.7).*

The researcher acted as moderator through a semi-structured, spontaneous discussion about mentoring experiences in each of the three universities, utilising prompt questions detailed in Appendix D. These prompt questions were derived from the open profile questionnaire responses and those retrieved from the Online Discussion Forum. The key challenges were to encourage all participants to engage in a dialogue in turn and to avoid the dominance of strong personalities. The Online Seminar was characterised by lively discussions, and participants were encouraged to share experiences and to comment on the mentoring experiences of other group members from other universities. *‘This reliance on interaction between participants is designed to elicit more of the participants’ points of view than would be evidenced in more researcher-dominated interviewing’* (Mertens, 2010, p.240). The moderator plays a pivotal role, both in the preparation of questions and in their capacity as discussion facilitator in the online seminar, by directing questions to each group in turn and alternating the group who responds first. *“Working with visual methods and media enables researchers to engage in ways that are empathetic, participatory or aesthetic with other people’s embodied experiences”* (Phoenix and Smith, 2011, p.xi).

## **Data Analysis**

The data analysis method used is that advocated by Charmaz (2009, 2006) i.e. a constructivist approach to grounded theory which allows the researcher to construct an original analysis of the data. She argues that there are multiple realities in the world and

"generalisation are partial, conditional and situated in time and space" (Charmaz, 2006, p.141). Therefore, the researcher co-constructs data with participants, recognizing the subjectivity. Rich, accurate accounts of the participant's narrative are valued. In effect,

*Grounded theorists start with the data that we construct through our observations, interactions and materials we gather about the topic or setting. We study empirical events and experiences and pursue our hunches and potential analytic ideas about them. (Charmaz, 2009, p.4)*

Grounded theory methods employ a specific set of guidelines regarding how researchers construct analysis of the data. Themes are constructed from the data during the process of coding and memo-writing. Put succinctly, it involves the following stages:

- Making systematic comparisons throughout inquiry
- Interacting with data, codes, and categories
- Doing analytic writing from the start i.e. *memo-writing*
- Making early links between the empirical world and theoretical ideas and checking them *theoretical sampling*.

During the coding process, the researcher 'attaches labels to segments of data (Charmaz, 2009, p.5) explaining the essence of the piece. In fact, Charmaz (2009) asserts: "*Coding distills data, sorts them, and gives us a handle for making comparisons with other segments of data*" (p.5). Researchers emphasize the context when they are coding data. A number of codes were identified during this process e.g. Mentor provides personal and professional guidance and Mentor provides safe learning space. These were areas that were further explored in the data analysis process by comparing other data segments, to allow theory to be constructed. Charmaz (2009) posits:



*Through studying data, comparing them, and writing memos, we define ideas that best fit and interpret the data as tentative analytic categories. When inevitable questions arise and gaps in our categories appear we seek data that answer these questions and may fill the gap. (p.6)*

According to Black (2009), this cycle becomes

*An iterative spiral of purposive data gathering and analysis lies at the heart of the process. This spiral drives a process through which the researcher constructs, assesses and develops theoretical concepts from the data, up through increasingly higher levels of theoretical abstraction. This movement back and forth between the data, and the conceptual elements being developed is continued until a theory has been constructed which accounts for the variation in the data. (p.92)*

In this study the researcher followed Charmaz (2006) coding process as follows:

1. Used line-by-line coding as an initial tool for opening up the data
2. Asked what is happening in each slice of data
3. Compared data with data
  - a. Statement with statement
  - b. Story with story
  - c. Incident with incident
4. Then compared code with code

### **Coding for what is happening**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Memo</b>
Purpose to support and guide them on their professional development and not only professionally but maybe personally because there may be some other issues	Purpose of mentoring being more than professional. It also develops personal attributes of pre service teacher. This requires certain mentor teacher attributes

like time management or conflict or preparation that you may have to support them with as well. Primarily the role is support and guidance. <i>(Georgie, Mentor, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)</i>	
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**Table 3.2: Grounded Theory Data Analysis, Initial Coding**

### **Compare Data with Data**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Memo</b>
Mentor has developed an approachable attitude but also is capable of providing criticism, advice and encouragement. <i>(Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, November 2010)</i>	A range of attributes to guide professional and personal development in pre-service teacher
Mentor is a “critical friend” in this process. <i>(Edward, UT, UUU, Northern Ireland Online Discussion Forum, November 2010)</i>	The paradox of critical and friend – the professional and the personal relationship with pre-service teacher

**Table 3.3: Grounded Theory Data Analysis, Compare Data with Data**

### Compare Code with Code

Code	Memo
Mentor provides personal and professional guidance	Holistic approach to mentoring
Mentor provides safe learning space for pre-service teacher	Safe personally <i>and</i> professionally

Table 3.4: Grounded Theory Data Analysis, Compare Code with Code

### Conclusion

A key feature of this report is the way in which many views of the same issue are presented in a process of crystallisation (Richardson, 2000). It can be argued that this process offers a rich understanding of both the case study contexts *and* the key themes which have been inducted through a comparative, and interactive approach *to* inquiry that offers several open-ended strategies *for* conducting emergent inquiry (Charmaz, 2006). It is through this process of crystallisation (Richardson, 2000) that a contribution to existing literature on mentoring in teacher education can be made. Five key themes were inducted through the process of constructivist ground theory:

1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education
2. The purpose of the mentor-mentee relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.

3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.
4. The Mentor should ensure a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and explore praxis in a variety of contexts.
5. Mentors need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentors pre-service teachers effectively.

These will now be discussed in detail in the Discussion and Findings section. Themes will be brought to life by linking in vivo quotes from the Online Discussion Forum and the Online Seminar with relevant theoretical frameworks. Open profile questionnaire quotes are not used here as they informed the construction of Online Discussion Forum questions using the process of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006).

## **Discussion and Findings**

The primary aim of this one-year research project funded by the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) was to produce a Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring across the Island of Ireland, by interrogating current mentoring practice in three PETE programmes; University College Cork, Ireland (UCC), University of Ulster at Jordanstown Northern Ireland (UUJ) and University of Birmingham, England (UB).

There were five key findings from this study which form the Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring. They are as follows:

1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.
2. The purpose of the mentor-mentee relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.
3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.
4. The Mentor should ensure a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and explore praxis in a variety of contexts.

5. Mentors need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentors pre-service teachers effectively.

Each of these findings is now discussed in detail.

**1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.**

Effective Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes are defined by a range of key characteristics one of which, it is argued, is the value they place on the strength of the school-university relationship in supporting pre-service teacher learning. Darling Hammond (2006b) describes this as:

*Strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling and teacher education. (p.305)*

A plethora of international research identifies ways in which school and university personnel, for example Mentors and UTs would, ideally, work together (Chambers, in press-b, Chambers, in press-a, Youens and McCarthy, 2007, O'Sullivan, 2003, McCullick, 2001, Hynes-Dussel, 1999, Graber, 1989, Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005, Darling-Hammond, 2006a, Darling-Hammond, 2006b, Cochran-Smith, 2005, Brouwer and Korthagen, 2005, Behets and Vergauwen, 2006). Collaboration between these roles, it is argued, enables ITE programmes to deliver shared, logical programmes of teacher education (McIntyre et al., 1996, Hardy, 1999). A pivotal aspect of ITE is TP, where the school is identified as the key worksite for the school-university partnership:

*The school...constitutes a rich environment where students [teachers] will learn a great deal of their job [therefore] placement of students [teachers] in schools is crucial in teacher preparations*

*[with] the ecology of the school setting – pupils, physical environment, curriculum and community - a major influence on [student teacher development]. (Behets and Vergauwen, 2006, p.407-408)*

All participants in this study corroborate these assertions. Edward, UT, connotes that:

*Its absolutely essential that those relationships between the university and colleagues that are out in schools is fostered, maintained and valued. The best practice demands this. Pre-service teachers thrive in situations where we have a good professional relationship with placement colleagues and the university. (Edward, UT, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Andrew, Mentor, espouses the fact that strong relationships between school and university personnel strengthen the quality of the teaching practice programme:

*I do personally feel that the strength of the partnership between the school and the university is essential and certainly we enjoy that here. I think it is that strength that kind of secures the breadth and depth of the trainees experience and it secures a coordinated approach to the process of training teachers. (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Furthermore, Sarah, Mentor describes how the triad of ‘mentor-university tutor-pre-service teacher’ provides a strong support for the pre-service teacher:

*By the two organisations working together you’ve got that interrelated partnership, a real strength to the system. It’s like that triangulation of support where you’ve got the trainee students, the university, and you’ve got the school provider. (Sarah, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Andrew, Mentor, explained the mutually beneficial relationship with the University as follows:

*The link we’ve got with the university I think is really positive and I always feel that they support me as much as I support them. (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Abigail, UT, added that:

*There's a two way thing going on where we're trying to give new ideas ourselves, student teachers are also doing that and the mentor teachers are telling us how this thing is working, if its working and how we can tweak what we're doing. It's actually been a really energetic process and it's been eye opening from my perspective. (Abigail, UT, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Andrew, Mentor, agrees:

*We would find that school and university links are quite key because it is a mutually interdependent relationship where we've actually learnt lots of new ideas from trainee students that have been with us and they're bringing the latest innovations. At the university they have the most up to date pedagogical for teacher learning as well. We're learning from them as much as them learning from us and therefore it has to be mutually dependent on each other. (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Laoise, UT, sums up the value of a strong school-university partnership saying:

*I suppose its only through that support system that you can create a shared vision through consultation and communication between all three partners; The School, The University, The Mentor teacher. (Laoise, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

The findings of this study align with research literature espousing that strong collaborative school-university partnerships have the potential to overcome disconnection and encourage praxis and a shared vision of ITE:

*School-university partnerships decrease the discrepancies between advocated practice and situated practice, thus increasing the congruence of messages between the school and university contexts. (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005, p.331)*

## **2. The purpose of the mentoring relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.**

Learning is a social process in which newcomers (pre-service teachers) and old-timers (mentors) learn from each other in a multidirectional process within the community of



practice (Wenger, 1998). This study's findings corroborate this. Nora, Mentor, explains that she:

*Would find it to be a two-way system of learning. Every time the trainee teacher comes out I'm always learning new things from them, as well. They're coming straight from University with the freshest ideas so I found that it is a two-way system.* (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Aoife, Mentor, agrees saying: *"it is definitely two way communication. So there are benefits to the mentors as well as to the trainees"* (Aoife, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Conor, the novice mentor, asserts:

*Yeah I'd say the same coming from just after being in the mentor process as a trainee teacher I feel that its definitely a two way system and this year as a mentor I feel that I learn from the trainee teachers coming in as well.* (Conor, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Georgie, Mentor, describes:

*A mutually beneficial relationship. Its an opportunity for us as professionals to obtain new ideas about practices and up and coming knowledge in the area that sometimes we don't get time and the students will come in and provide that. We thrive with students coming in.* (Georgie, Mentor, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Nora, Mentor, enjoys being a mentor as:

*It allows teacher to reflect on own work as well as the student teachers. There is always something new to consider when working with student teachers and is a way to stay up to date with the latest advances in teaching.* (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, December 2010)

These views concur with authors such as for instance (Ehrich, 2008) who observes that *'for mentors, it is said to revitalise their career and to bring personal satisfaction'* (p.31).

The notion of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991) explains the movement of newcomers from the periphery of the community of practice to become full participants at its amorphous core, and how newcomers move in and old-timers move

out in 'reproduction cycles' as the community of practice evolves (ibid). Thus, this movement from the periphery to the centre means becoming progressively more engaged and active in the practice of the community. Wenger and Snyder (2000) commented that the community:

*Typically has a core of participants whose passion for the topic energises the community and who provide intellectual and social leadership. (p. 3)*

The core is characterised by participation and commitment, rather than expertise and mastery, although those are components of the core. Lave and Wenger (1991) argued that *"mastery resides not in the master but in the organisation of the community of practice of which the master is a part"* (p. 95). If Legitimate Peripheral Participation is the process by which newcomers become old-timers, as part of the process the newcomer realises that formal access to the core must not only be negotiated, but access to this hidden transcript of the back stage, earned. The newcomer craves access to front and backstage (Goffman, 1959). In this metaphor, knowledge of both the 'front and back stage' represents full participation in the community of practice. Heaney (1995) pointed out that the newcomer exercises individual agency, choosing to move on the periphery of the community of practice. In essence, he asserted that learning in this context is defined as *"an individual's ongoing negotiation with communities of practice which ultimately gives definition to both self and that practice"* (p.2).

In this study mentors and UTs believed that the pre-service teacher should have access to the 'front and backstage' of school life. Simon, UT,

*The main purpose of mentoring, I think as well from our perspective would be professional sharing. They've got an insider perspective of the role and function of Physical Education in the*

*department in that school and the practitioners there share that insider knowledge with students on placement. That's part and parcel of the mentoring process. (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Sarah, Mentor explained the type of learning in which the pre-service teacher engaged:

*Within that team they can develop their leadership and management skills, and their coaching skills so they can coach other people of all different ranges of experience. That hopefully will prepare them for future leadership management positions themselves as they move on in their career and aspire to other positions in schools. (Sarah, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Sarah, Mentor, explained the importance of valuing the pre-service teacher contribution to school-life:

*New teachers, new entrants to the profession need to actually feel that they can make a positive influence in the department/school that they are in that they have got lots to contribute to a department in a school. (Sarah, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

She added that in fact:

*Trainee teachers help to shape departmental and whole school vision as well. And that's really important because you've got people who are new to the profession who are helping to shape future vision alongside experienced colleagues. (Sarah, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Notwithstanding this, pre-service teachers need to build alliances and networks with other professionals in the field:

*It is important to be part of a team. It is important to have that network of support and I think where people are working on their own actually that in a sense is quite an infantile structure that is actually quite fragile and potentially quite vulnerable for people who are entering the profession. For us I would say its key as quickly as you can as soon as you can identify who your network of support might be and try and retain that but also try and extend that and they're people who will*

*support you but also you can support them at times where you may need to.* (Sarah, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Simon, UT, outlines the benefits of professional sharing to all members of the Mentor and pre-service teacher:

*The benefits for trainee teachers in the schools here are very much that they're not fragmentalised, they're not isolated, that they're connected in to a strong system of support where you have got those learning communities, where you have got those clusters, and you have got people learning with and from each other at whatever stage of development that they are at whether they're a trainee teacher or an experienced colleague.* (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Findings indicated that membership of these learning communities are especially important in situations where PE teachers might work on their own in their subject area in schools: *"In a lot of Irish situations they're going to end up on their own"* (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Sarah, Mentor, agrees that smaller schools in England have a similar difficulty: *"I can understand where colleagues in smaller schools may feel quite isolated"* (Sarah, Mentor, UB Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

### **3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.**

Armour and Fernandez-Balboa (2001) contend that there is a link between the person and the teacher, coining the term 'person-pedagogue' to describe the true role of each teacher. They believe that this ought to be at the core of professional development. In

order to develop both pre-service teacher as a person and pedagogue the effective mentor is equipped with a number of key skills in fulfillment of a range of roles i.e. *“Good mentors are critical friends, personal guides, counselors”* (Fletcher, 1998, p.110). Findings from this study show that the mentor guides the pre-service teacher on both a professional and personal level. This supports findings from Nation and Chambers (2011) who found that teachers relied on collegial support as a key mechanism for personal and professional development, Georgie, Mentor, explains that the purpose of the mentor is:

*To support and guide them on their professional development and not only professionally but maybe personally because there may be some other issues like time management or conflict or preparation that you may have to support them with as well. Primarily the role is support and guidance.* (Georgie, Mentor, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

A view corroborated by Matthew, Mentor, *“I suppose the main purpose is for guidance for them”* (Matthew, Mentor, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011) and Aoife, Mentor: *“I would say the same- guidance of a novice or a new teacher”* (Aoife, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011) and Simon, UT: *“I think the support and guidance element is critical”* (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). More than this, Laoise, Mentor, contends that this guidance should be:

*All positive. You can do that for them too, to make sure to keep feeding them the positive information and develop that confidence really is what you want at the end. You often need that positive experience in order for those competencies to then grow and develop.* (Laoise, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Aoife, Mentor, agrees saying:

*Some of the students are just down the negative route and you have to keep giving them encouragement that they can believe in their teaching.* (Aoife, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Nora, Mentor, believes that by doing this the mentor teacher can build pre-service teacher confidence and:

*Confidence is key because they can find themselves getting wiped out throughout the year just poured with teaching and lesson plans and all that sort of stuff.* (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

The quality of professional dialogue is paramount. Simon, UT, contends that mentor feedback helps:

*Develop trainee teachers into critical practitioners, into reflective practitioners and empower them to actually develop into those. So develop into people who are reflective of their own practice and into people who are also prepared to take new things on board as they're finding their feet.* (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Nora, Mentor, asserts that the mentor must be a reflective practitioner (Nora, Mentor, Online Discussion Forum, November 2010). The role of mentor has the potential to become mutually beneficial in terms of professional growth. McIntyre and Hagger (1996) refer to the main benefits of mentoring, including *'reduced feelings of isolation, increased confidence and self-esteem, professional growth and improved self-reflection and problem-solving capacities'* (Hagger & McIntyre, 1996, cited in Hobson et al., 2009, p.209). Engaging in mentoring can serve as a stimulus for reflection, a means of engaging in professional dialogue and as a validation of good practice. *'Serving as a mentor pushes one not only to model but also to be accountable for that modelling.*

*Identifying the rationale requires reflection-on-action for validation'* (Weasmer and Woods, 2003, p.69).

Edward, UT, summed up the relationship between mentor and pre-service teacher as: *"open and trusting, where the mentor was a critical friend. The mentee could express opinions about the TP experience and the mentor was available to listen actively to the mentees experience"* (Edward, UT, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, November, 2010). Nora, Mentor, believes that the *"mentor must develop an approachable attitude but also be capable of providing criticism, advice and encouragement"* (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Mentors also noted *"the importance of the mentor in protecting the student when they're on teaching practice"* (Matthew, Mentor, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011), Matthew explained that often pre-service teachers are eager to impress:

*I think when you go into a school you want to leave a good impression. You just become the "yes man". you say yes to everything, everybody asks you to do a wee job for them and before you know it you've a reef of jobs to get through as well as your teaching, your planning, and your evaluating. So I think that there's a big role there in protecting that they don't get too many jobs that they can't do their teaching right.* (Matthew, Mentor, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Conor, Mentor was in agreement:

*I definitely agree with that just coming from the trainee teacher point of view last year to the mentor this year that as a trainee teacher you kind of want to please everyone, you want to fit in, and very quickly you'll pick up jobs left, right, and centre. So I think that's an important role of the*

*mentor as well just to even protect them for getting too much on their plate.* (Conor, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Abigail, UT, thought that it was important that the Mentor advised on the pre-service teacher's career strategy and how to be assertive on teaching practice to protect the quality of the teaching experience:

*Advise them about it and stand up for them a bit. Because they're trying to create a CV as well as being out on their training. But the most important piece of the jigsaw is getting the teaching right actually. And schools will capitalise on student teachers in that way.* (Abigail, UT, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

#### **4. The Mentor should provide a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and to explore praxis in a variety of contexts.**

Yamamota (1988) describes the paradox of mentorship comprising *"an experience of transcendence for the mentor and transformation for the mentee...or change in perspective*. Therefore, according to Yamamoto (1988), the principal function of the mentor is *"Iconoclastic in nature so as to throw the [mentee] off his or her comfortable and customary perch...making the familiar unfamiliar [forcing] a reexamination of the known world"* (p.187). Therefore, the first step is to ensure that *"a pre-service teacher recognises that however good that they are, that they're just on the second step of the ladder and that teaching is an ongoing learning process"* (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Further to this, Andrew asserts that: *"The core purpose of mentoring for me is supporting the trainee in making the link between perhaps a theoretical and*



*performance background into the teaching environment”* (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Edward, UT describes the value of transferring university-based learning to school contexts using mentor expertise to support this transition:

*As part of the theoretical support for them is we would induct them into a range of teaching styles- the spectrum of teaching styles and so on because within each style there is an opportunity to shift responsibility away from the teacher to empower learners. Now that's fine to do here (university) when you do it in practical sessions and in workshops. The real learning comes, whenever they take those styles into real schools, real classrooms, real pupils, and then try and match the pedagogy with the learner needs. And that's where the experienced teacher comes into their own in terms of helping support that styles initiative, comforting them when things don't work.* (Edward, UT, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Aoife, Mentor, contends:

*The university focuses more on the theory and the school allows the opportunity for the practical application of that theory to take place in a very secure and safe environment for the trainee.* (Aoife, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

This transition to praxis happens gently, as Caroline, UT, explains:

*So, in order to address that and help them we would often maybe in one lesson we would facilitate the promotion of a different type of teaching style by allowing a team teach or by encouraging them to get the opportunity to get in and observe the staff teaching themselves and to formally write that up so they can observe how its done from someone with a bit more experience.* (Caroline, UT, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Abigail, UT, purports that this approach:

*Is a very nice mechanism of leading them in gently into it and there's a bit of a safety net and its okay if things go a bit wrong. Give pre-service teachers the permission to be a learner teacher because certainly in schools here sometimes it's believed that they're fully fledged, even as a student teacher, and they're not given the chance to learn the trade. The mentoring system allows them that cushioning.* (Abigail, UT, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Matthew, Mentor, asserts that the value of this:

*The big benefit is to try out new ideas, try out new teaching styles helping the pre-service teacher to branch out. Often, people that come into teaching think that you should already be a teacher before you've learnt to try those ideas out. (Matthew, Mentor, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

More than this, Edward, UT, sees:

*An opportunity to ground the concept of teaching styles within various placement contexts and the practitioner/mentor is there to oil the wheels of that process in terms of what works in their school with their learners and why do they think their learners work in that context. (Edward, UT, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Simon, UT, believes that teaching practice allows:

*Trainee teachers have to really have a go at trying different teaching styles. Andrew is probably the first one to always encourage them to take a risk and say try something else- try some guided discovery, try some reciprocal, try some teaching games for understanding, don't be afraid to start with a game. Try and see what happens. Take that risk and try out different things. You can see what happens and how the pupils actually respond to that. it doesn't matter if the lesson goes belly up. (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

By allowing pre-service teachers to work in a variety of contexts pre-service teachers learn:

*The key skill of adaptability because these trainees are kind of on the first step and what we're surely trying to do is to create a framework of their future working and teaching. (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

Nora, Mentor, contends that the mentor assists the trainee to become the sort of teacher they want to be (Nora, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, October 2010) and Andrew, Mentor believes that the “*primary goal for the mentor should be helping the trainee prepare for a career in education*” (Andrew, Mentor, UB,

England, Online Discussion Forum, October 2010). In order to do this, all mentors must set targets for pre-service teacher progress:

*Important to set high standards for the student teacher from the beginning therefore Goal setting and feedback are important to teacher placements.* (Tracy, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, January, 2011)

Edward, UT, contends:

*Targets are important to mentoring and should be the outcome of reflective activities and processes that happen between Mentors/mentees leading to agreed outcomes. They should be personalized and link student progress with university requirements.* (Edward, UT, UJJ, Northern Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, January 2011)

**5. Mentors need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentors pre-service teachers effectively.**

Mentor suitability is defined in relation to disposition and expertise (Chambers, 2008) i.e. being both willing and able to mentor. Suitability can be broken down into a number of key elements i.e. the mentor possessing particular interpersonal traits with high levels of emotional intelligence, being intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985) and being well known as scholars and professionals (Manathunga, 2007).

In this study, none of the mentors fall into the reassessment/self-doubt category or the Conservatism category in Huberman's original table (Table 2.2, p.32). This may be because these mentors *wanted* to mentor pre-service teachers i.e. they were intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985). William, Mentor, believed that: *"those that choose to mentor are usually the most suitable"* (William, Mentor, UB, England, Online Discussion Forum, October, 2010) while Simon, UT, asserted *"the mentor is often a teacher with*

*experience who wants to get involved in teacher training*” (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Discussion Forum, October, 2010). This willingness to mentor may be linked Kram’s (1985) assertion that the most successful mentors are those who volunteer to mentor and who also want to enhance their own career development. In essence:

*Mentoring is seen as a reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career of both.*  
(Healy and Welchert, 1990, p. 17)

Therefore, the mentoring act can be deemed both altruistic and self-promoting as the mentor-mentee relationship is often a vehicle for achieving midlife ‘generativity’ (Erikson, 1963) i.e. *A transcendence of stagnating self-preoccupation via exercise of an instinctual drive to create and care for new life, whether in the form...of productivity, or of creativity* (Erikson, 1977, p.1). In this way, being a mentor is a positive influence on experienced teachers who are in need of renewed impetus in their careers (McCaughy and Rovegno, 2003). Furthermore, Cox (2000) suggests that central to the notion of mentor self-promotion is the idea that effective mentors have an understanding of self or an emotional competence and *“are comfortable in their own skin”* (p.2). Having such traits, the mentor functions in developing the mentee’s career and also their psychosocial skills, linking to Fromm’s (1956) view that the mentor is *“not only, or even primarily, a source of knowledge but his function is to convey certain attitudes”* (p.117). Kram (1995) outlines the palette of mentor career functions as sponsorship, exposure and visibility, providing challenges, protection and training in ethical procedures. The psychosocial function relates to fostering competence, identity and self-efficacy through role modeling, counseling and friendship. It is argued that an experienced, emotionally competent mentor, can move easily between each function using *“deep listening”* (Snowber, 2005, p.345) as a key mentoring skill. This is discussed in detail earlier in the

report (see p.38). This allows the mentor *“to open up a hospitable space allowing the student to be herself, because she is received graciously”* (O’Reilly, 1998, p.8). In this space, the pre-service teacher learns *“An amalgam of all teachers’ cognitions, including declarative and procedural knowledge, beliefs and values that influence their preactive, interactive and postactive teaching activities”* (Zanting et al., 2003, p.196).

In this study, findings indicated that ‘suitable mentors’ used particular mentor pedagogies. In fact, the quality of mentor pedagogy was influenced by a number of key factors:

- (a) Expertise: number of years teaching *and* number of years mentoring
- (b) Disposition: position in Huberman’s (1989) Career Life Cycle
- (c) Level in Fuller’s (1969) Concerns Model

Based on these three factors, the mentoring pedagogy encompassed a particular Mentor Support and Challenge level (Daloz, 1986) (a) high mentor support/low mentee risk, (b) medium mentor support/medium mentee risk and (c) low mentor support/high mentee risk (Daloz, 1986). Furthermore, at each of Daloz (1986) levels, the mentor employed a particular mentoring style (Glickman et al., 2001). In fact, Glickman et al (2001) asserted that the mentor could use *three styles* of mentoring, depending on the mentee learning needs: directive, non-directive and collaborative. Such needs are defined by the mentee’s levels of abstract thinking, expertise and commitment (ibid) (as outlined on p.30). What is interesting in this study is that for novice mentors, the pedagogy offered was driven by *mentor* learning needs not *mentee* learning needs i.e. the novice mentor used a directive style (Glickman et al., 2001). In contrast, a mentor

with 7 to 18 years experience wanted to use a collaborative style and the mentor with the most experience moved through the range of styles dependent on mentee learning needs favouring the non-directive style on Glickman et al's (2001) continuum. We contend the quality of pre-service teacher learning encouraged by each mentor pedagogy may be aligned with Blooms (1956) taxonomy of learning domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor). The following data support these findings.

Conor, a novice teacher *“coming from just after being in the mentor process as a trainee teacher”* (Conor, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Seminar, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2011) was in his first year of teaching. He was therefore in the ‘Career Entry’ phase of his Mentor Lifecycle, a mentor preoccupied with surviving the early mentoring experiences, and according to McCormack and Barnett’s (2006) study on novice teachers is constantly discovering new territory and experiences moments of ‘reality shock’ (Stroot et al., 1993) as he is confronted with the complexities of mentoring. Conor, Mentor, stated that he *‘badly needed mentor training’* (Conor, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, November, 2010). Indeed, Odell (1990) asserts that teachers in this phase need to be mentored closely themselves to overcome difficulties encountered as a beginning teacher. Conor, Mentor, seemed to recognize that he might be not suitable for the role: *“school management picks the mentor, so it’s down to who available not who is suitable”* (Conor, Mentor, UCC, Ireland, Online Discussion Forum, November 2010). As a novice mentor, Conor, UCC, Ireland, was ‘concerned about self’ (Fuller, 1969) and was only capable of high mentor support/low mentee risk (Daloz, 1986) pedagogical strategies which involved modeling and directive practice (Glickman et al., 2001).

Therefore, Conor, Mentor, could encourage pre-service teacher learning at the most basic level of Blooms (1956) taxonomy of learning domains (see Figure 4.1).

In contrast, Matthew, UT, with eight years mentoring experience, is on the cusp of two of Fuller's Levels (1969) i.e. the Concerns about Tasks/Concerns about pre-service teacher learning. He uses a collaborative learning style (Glickman et al., 2001) and encourages learning at the middle levels of Blooms Taxonomy (1956) (application and analysis/valuing and organizing/developing and articulating). He explains his mentoring pedagogical strategy: *"The big benefit is to try out new ideas, try out new teaching styles helping the pre-service teacher to branch out"* (Matthew, Mentor, UUJ, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

In this study, the most experienced mentors have moved to being 'fully concerned with pre-service teacher learning' (Fuller, 1969a). This is evident from the following data.

Simon, UT, comments on Andrew's, Mentor, approach:

*Andrew is probably the first one to always encourage them to take a risk and say try something else- try some guided discovery, try some reciprocal, try some teaching games for understanding, don't be afraid to start with a game. Try and see what happens. Take that risk and try out different things. You can see what happens and how the pupils actually respond to that. It doesn't matter if the lesson goes belly up* (Simon, UB, England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Andrew has thirty years mentoring experience and is able to offer mentor pedagogical strategies which low mentor support/high mentee risk (Daloz, 1986) encouraging more innovation in unpredictable situations through a non-directive mentoring style which can support pre-service teacher learning at the highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy (1956).

Edward, UT, agrees, asserting expert mentors move the pre-service teacher toward higher cognitive endeavours:

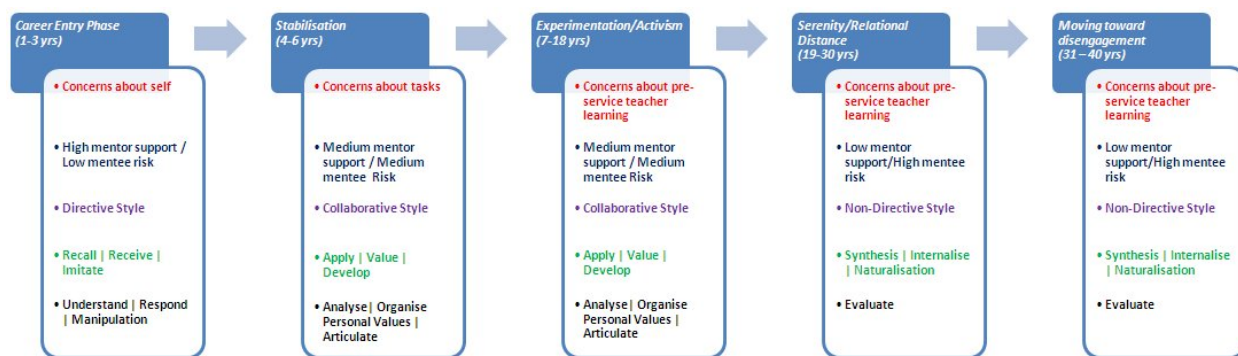
*The real learning comes, whenever they take those styles into real schools, real classrooms, real pupils, and then try and match the pedagogy with the learner needs. And that's where the experienced teacher comes into their own, in terms of helping support that styles initiative, comforting them when things don't work. (Edward, UT, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)*

From the findings, a hybrid 'Continuum of Factors Influencing Mentor Pedagogy' has been compiled (see Figure 4.1). This continuum shows an intersection of five theoretical frameworks which together provide an explanation of the factors which influence the mentoring pedagogies used by the mentor during TP. The assertion is that a mentor's (a) teaching expertise (Huberman, 1989) <sup>1</sup>, mentoring expertise *and* (b) position in the Concern's Model (Fuller, 1969a) influence the (c) pedagogies employed by the mentor within the 'Model of Support and Challenge' (Daloz, 1986) e.g. mentoring styles (Glickman et al., 2001) (e) to support pre-service teacher learning across Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning domains (Bloom et al., 1956).

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<sup>1</sup> Note: None of the mentors fall into the reassessment/self-doubt Category or the Conservatism category in Huberman's original table (see p.44) and so these have been removed from the table. This may be because these mentors *wanted* to mentor pre-service teachers i.e. they were intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985).





**Figure 4.1: Continuum of Factors Influencing quality of Mentor Pedagogy**

## Mentor Training

Mentor training is intended to promote a shared vision of initial teacher education amongst teacher educators and facilitates the passage from teacher to mentor roles. *‘Training and education are strategically linked together as part of an overall plan to keep mentoring visible... and provide a common set of understandings’* (Zachary, 2000, p.178). This study found that mentors in this study had a range of training experiences. Mentor teachers, Conor, Nora, Tracy, Aoife and Laoise have been involved the Telemachus Mentor Training Programme at UCC, Ireland. Sarah, Andrew and William at UB, England, have been involved in school-based mentor training: *In this school, teachers have undergone training in mentoring and want to support trainee teachers* (Andrew, Mentor, UB, England, Online Discussion Forum, November, 2010). Simon explains that there are two types of training available *“PE mentors are supported both with generic mentor training and specific PE mentor training”* (Simon, UT, UB, England, Online Discussion Forum, November, 2010). In UJJ, Matthew explains: *“I haven’t had any formal training in how to mentor so its just sort of these teachers come in and any*

*time that you have you try and give them some sort of feedback”* (Matthew, UUU, Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011).

Coolahan (2003) presented an understanding of teacher professional learning as the ‘three I’s’: Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Induction and In-career development. In these examples, there is a clear understanding that the process of becoming a teacher begins at the start of the formal period of ITE (Cochran-Smith, 2001). Indeed, there is increasing evidence that professional experiences in the early years of teaching are a crucial influence on teachers’ professional learning and formation of career intentions (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005). As Anderson (1987) pointed out:

*The challenge for [initial] teacher education is to foster commitment to school teaching and to prepare trainees for the reality of classroom practice, but at the same time to provide them with a broad general education, including the capacity to be critical and self-critical, and a familiarity with diverse viewpoints and experiences. (p.63)*

Given the importance of ITE in the professional learning career of a teacher, it is clear that mentors need to be trained to mentor pre-service teachers. These findings outline the nature of mentor training needed i.e. training the mentor as person-pedagogue (Armour and Fernandez-Balboa, 2001) to develop intrapersonal, interpersonal and pedagogical skills to e.g. sound and appropriate communication skills with adults as learners (Fletcher, 2000, p.11) and development of a range of mentoring styles (Glickman et al., 2001). If mentors who possess both teaching expertise and the right disposition are trained in the most up to date mentoring pedagogies, which place the pre-service teacher learning at the centre of the TP experience, the quality of pre-

service teacher education may improve ultimately that of pupil learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009, Yoon et al., 2007).

## ***Conclusion***

This section discussed the key findings of this study which outline a five-part Position Statement on Effective Mentoring in PETE. It is clear that the school-university partnership provide a central hub for pre-service teacher learning. The Position Statement further emphasises the need for each mentor within the school-university partnership to have expertise, the 'right' disposition and relevant training in order to deliver high quality mentee-centred learning support to every pre-service teacher in their care. The next section gives an overview of this study and offers some recommendations for further research.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This is a letter written by a trainee teacher to show the power of effective mentoring:

*You allowed me to be me and that was all I was looking for. I know you, being you, will tell me that I am not giving myself enough credit in this process but essentially what I am saying to you is this, I have always known what is inside me, but no one has ever taken the time or had the skills to draw out those qualities before. The insight you have given (facilitated) me into myself has literally turned my life around. I know that of course I am not yet quite a 'professional' and that I have still got a lot of work to do in terms of subject knowledge, planning, classroom management, differentiation, but the key thing is, now I feel I have the ability to tackle these things and more*  
(Fletcher, 2000, p.11)

This study aimed to interrogate current mentoring practice in three PETE programmes in Ireland, Northern Ireland and England to produce a Position Statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring across the Island of Ireland. The study comprised three cases studies centred on three universities respectively [UCC, UUJ and UB]. Across the three university sites, there were six UTs and ten mentors. Using qualitative data collection methods (open profile questionnaires, online discussion forum, online seminar) and a constructivist version of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2009) as a framework for data analysis, it was found that:

1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.
2. The purpose of the mentor-mentee relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.

3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.
4. The Mentor should ensure a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and explore praxis in a variety of contexts.
5. Mentors need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentor pre-service teachers effectively.

Recommendations support the need of valourisation, at policy and operational levels, of appropriate training for teacher mentors who should be selected because of their expertise and collaborative skills rather than convenience and availability. The resultant mentor-mentee relationship should be one that encourages the pre-service teacher to follow their dreams by taking well-planned pedagogical risks in the security of dynamic and varied professional teaching contexts in the knowledge that the mentor will not tread on their personal or professional aspirations.

The author would welcome further research in the following areas, which might extend knowledge in the field of teacher education:

1. Identification of effective mentor pedagogical strategies.
2. An evaluation of the impact of effective mentor pedagogical strategies on pre-service teacher learning across Blooms Taxonomy (1956).
3. Research on the impact of effective mentor pedagogies on pupil learning.
4. An analysis of how, when and why mentor teachers transition from simple to more complex mentor pedagogies.

5. Effective training for mentors which enhances mentor pedagogical strategies.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Ethical Approval

Appendix B: Consent Form

Appendix C: Open Profile Questionnaire

Appendix D: Online Seminar Guiding Questions

## ***Appendix A: Ethical Approval***

## UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC)

### ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

Name of applicant	Dr. Fiona C. Chambers	Date 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2010
Contact Details	Phone 4340	Email f.chambers@ucc.ie
Department/Unit	School of Education	
Title of project	Effective Mentoring within Physical Education Teacher Education	

		YES	NO
1	Do you consider that this project has significant ethical implications?		No
2	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	Yes	
3	Will participation be voluntary?	Yes	
4	Will you obtain informed consent in writing from participants?	Yes	
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason, and (where relevant) omit questionnaire items to which they do not wish to respond?	Yes	
6	Will data be treated with full confidentiality / anonymity (as appropriate)?	Yes	
7	If results are published, will anonymity be maintained and participants not identified?	Yes	
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?	Yes	
9	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		No
10	Will your participants include schoolchildren (under 18 years of age)?		No
11	Will your participants include people with learning or communication difficulties?		No
12	Will your participants include patients?		No
13	Will your participants include people in custody?		No
14	Will your participants include people engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug taking; illegal Internet behaviour)?		No
15	Is there a realistic risk of participants experiencing either		No

	physical or psychological distress?		
16	If yes to 15, has a proposed procedure, including the name of a contact person, been given? (see no 23)		

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

### 17. Aims of the project

- To prepare a summary of existing research on best practice in effective mentoring in the work place, within and beyond education
- To analyse three different models of mentoring in PETE in three research sites, and to compare them with each other and the existing literature on effective mentoring
- To provide an opportunity for mentors in the three research sites (UCC, University of Ulster at Jordanstown and University of Birmingham) to comment on current practice and to identify gaps in their training and preparation for becoming an effective mentor
- To prepare a position statement on effective mentoring in PETE, using the format of a collaborative seminar, that can inform practice in the three research sites, underpin joint research publications and provide a rationale for further collaborative research

### 18. Brief description and justification of methods and measures to be used (attach copy of questionnaire / interview protocol / discussion guide / etc.)

Questionnaire attached.

### 19. Participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria

Ten mentors from each of the three research sites [30 participants] - University College Cork, University of Ulster at Jordanstown and University of Birmingham and two key university links at each site (lead researcher plus key tutor).

### 20. Concise statement of ethical issues raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them

All those engaged in this project are over 18 years of age. Participants are given the opportunity to understand the nature of the project through meeting with the Investigator at each of the three research sites. Each participant signs an informed consent form and may disengage from research at any time.

### 21. Arrangements for informing participants about the nature of the study (cf. Question 3)

The Investigator at each site will meet with mentors and discuss nature of project before disseminating Informed Consent forms for signature.

### 22. How you will obtain Informed Consent - cf. Question 4 (attach relevant form[s])

The Investigator at each site will disseminate Informed Consent forms to each participant for signature.  
(see attached)

**23. Outline of debriefing process (cf. Question 8). If you answered YES to Question 15, give details here. State what you will advise participants to do if they should experience problems (e.g. who to contact for help).**

**24. Estimated start date and duration of project.**

September 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2011

**Signed** *Dr Fiona C. Chambers* **Date** 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010  
*Applicant*

#### **Notes**

1. Please submit this form and any attachments to Dr. S. Hammond, Chair, SREC, c/o Mairéad Mooney, Office of the Vice President for Research, Block E, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Food Science Building, University College Cork, College Road, Cork. Please also forward an electronic copy to [m.mooney@ucc.ie](mailto:m.mooney@ucc.ie)
2. Research proposals can receive only provisional approval from SREC in the absence of approval from any agency where you intend to recruit participants. If you have already secured the relevant consent, please enclose a copy with this form.
3. SREC is not primarily concerned with methodological issues but may comment on such issues in so far as they have ethical implications.

*This form is adapted from pp. 13-14 of Guidelines for Minimum Standards of Ethical Approval in Psychological Research (British Psychological Society, July, 2004)*

Last update: 20/6/08

## ***Appendix B: Consent Form***



## Consent Form

I.....agree to participate in Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) research study on:

### **“Effective Mentoring within Physical Education Teacher Education”**

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for any interview with me to be recorded.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, either before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the research and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box:)

I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview

I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview

Signed.....

Date.....

## ***Appendix C: Open Profile Questionnaire***

## Questionnaire for Mentor Teachers

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

**The questionnaire has three sections.**

**Section A:** General Information (questions 1-8) asks for some basic biographical data

**Section B:** Teacher Role (questions 9 and 10) provides you with an opportunity to express your opinion about your role as a teacher.

**Section C:** Mentor Role (questions 11 – 19) is interested in finding out your opinions and ideas on the mentor role

### **Section A: General Information**

1. Male ☐ Female ☐ (please tick)

2. Age range (Please circle) 20 – 30 ☐

31 – 40 ☐

41 – 50 ☐

51 – 60 ☐

61 – 65 ☐

3. Name of current school

4. Number of schools in which you have taught to date

5. Academic qualifications

6. Other qualifications

7. Second/subsidiary teaching subjects (if any)

Number of years teaching

1 - 3 years ☐ 4 - 6years ☐ 7 - 18 years ☐

19 - 30 years ☐ 31 – 40 years ☐

### **Section B: Teacher Role**

8. Please tell us why you became a teacher?

9. Has this motivation changed during your career (please explain)?

### **Section C: Mentor Role**

10. How many years have you been a mentor-teacher?

11. Approximately how many pre-service teachers have you mentored?

12. Describe the mentor training you have received to date. If your training has been extensive, list as many activities as you can recall.

13. Which of the following skills and attributes are essential for effective mentors? Please rank in order of importance (5 being very important and 1 being least important):

Good communication	
Ability to criticise constructively	
Excellent Subject Knowledge	
Management	
Leadership	
Problem Solving	
Other (please specify)	
Other (please specify)	

14. Which of the following mentor qualities are essential for effective mentors. Please rank in order of importance (5 being very important and 1 being least important):

Caring	
Trustworthy	
Empathic	
Motivating	
Friendly	
Other (please specify)	
Other (please specify)	

15. What impact does the mentor role have on your day-to-day work?

[illegible]

16. Do you receive any incentive /reward for your role as mentor teacher? (Please tick as many as are relevant).

Additional pay	
Professional accreditation	
Additional non-contact hours	
Letter of acknowledgement	
Other (please state)	

How do you think your role of mentor could be enhanced/improved?

--

17. Describe the mentoring you received on teaching practice as a student teacher?

--

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

## ***Appendix D: Online Seminar Guiding Questions***

### **Online Seminar Questions**

1. What is the main purpose of mentoring? What do you consider to be at the core of the mentor/trainee teacher relationship?
2. What are the most important tools of the mentor? What do you consider to be your major strategies in supporting weak/strong trainee teachers?
3. What should be the main focus of mentoring? Developing subject knowledge, or developing teaching behaviours?
4. How do you support trainee teachers in developing a range of teaching styles?
5. What do you consider to be the most important influences on trainee teachers' learning and development, whilst they are on school experience? How important is the influence of departmental teaching practices on their development?
6. What are the benefits of schools and Higher Education Institutions working in partnership to support trainee teachers?
7. Which main characteristics should trainee teachers have developed at the end of the mentoring period?